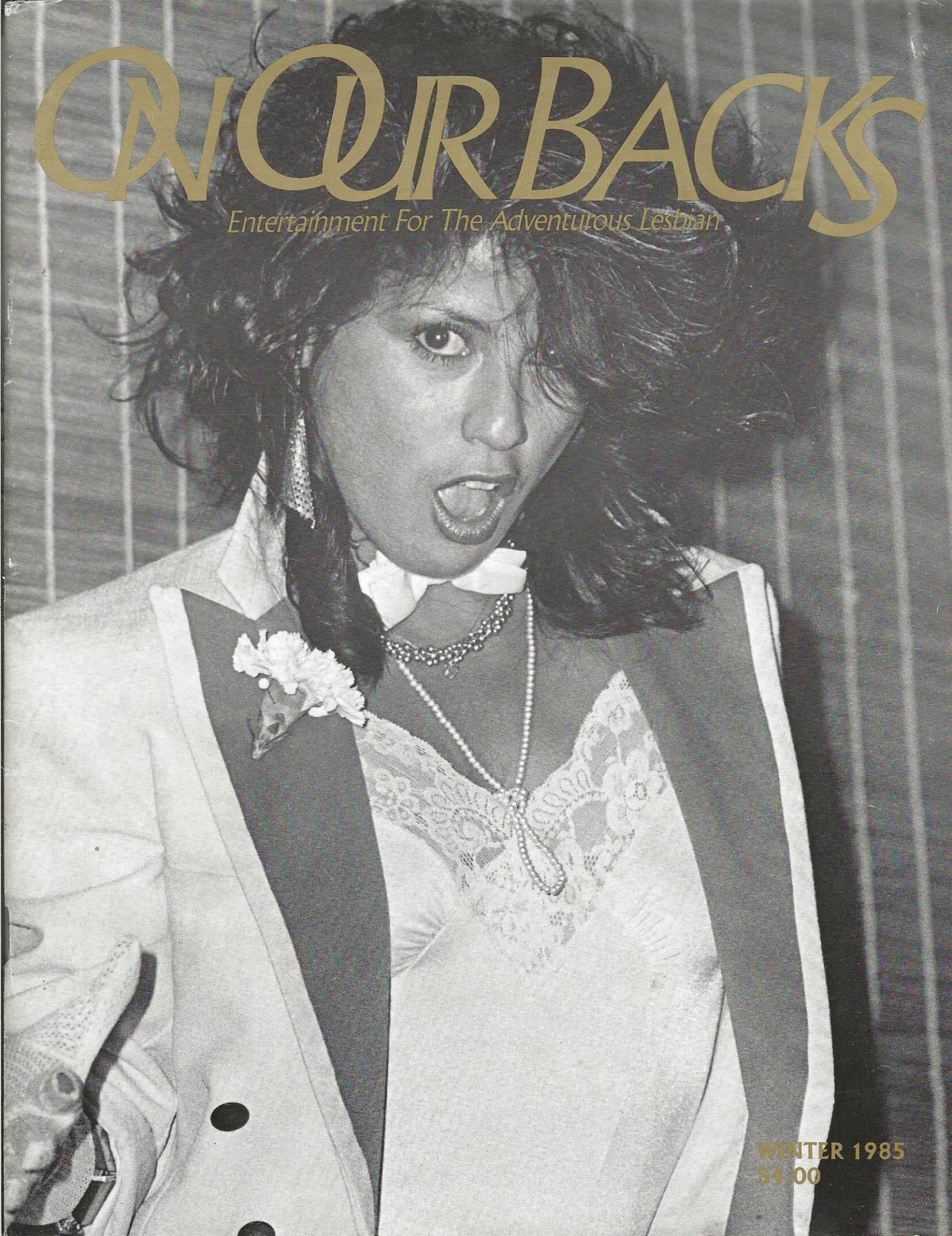
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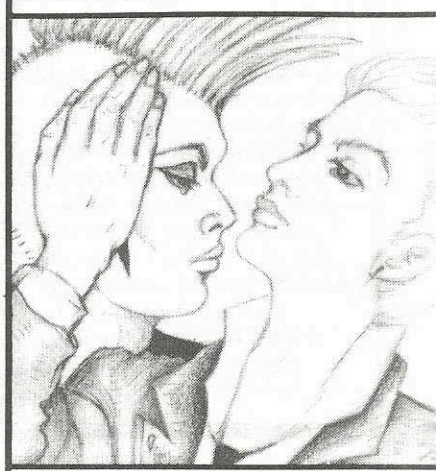

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# LETTERS LOVE/HATE/LUST

**Yahoo! At last! Finally** a magazine celebrating our sexual passion in its glory! As you can probably tell, I'm just a bit excited by it all. I've been out 22 years and your magazine is a long-time fantasy come true. May your efforts and pleasure continue to flourish for many years.

In this mostly conservative, narrow-minded eastern town, many lesbians have been horrified by *On Our Backs*, and have made it clear they would make a huge scene if the one women's bookstore carried it. They rant and rave about how exploitative it is, etc. It makes me wonder — do they ever "do it." How sad it is that they are so ashamed of their sexuality! There was not this uptightness about lesbian lust before the feminist movement started dictating its Christian ethics on what is right or wrong for dykes. But in my recent visit to the west coast, I was thrilled to see that this bullshit attitude is finally changing for more and more lesbians. Dykes expressing hidden desires coming out into roles, s/m, being sleazy! When I went to the lesbian strip show in San Francisco at Baybrick's I almost passed out it was so hot! Talk about an old dream coming true! I could spend every Tuesday night there for the rest of my life.

Here is a story that has been inside me for years. What a treat to have you all to send it to. It's the first sex story I have ever written, and I had to go cool off in the snow many times as it was being put on paper.

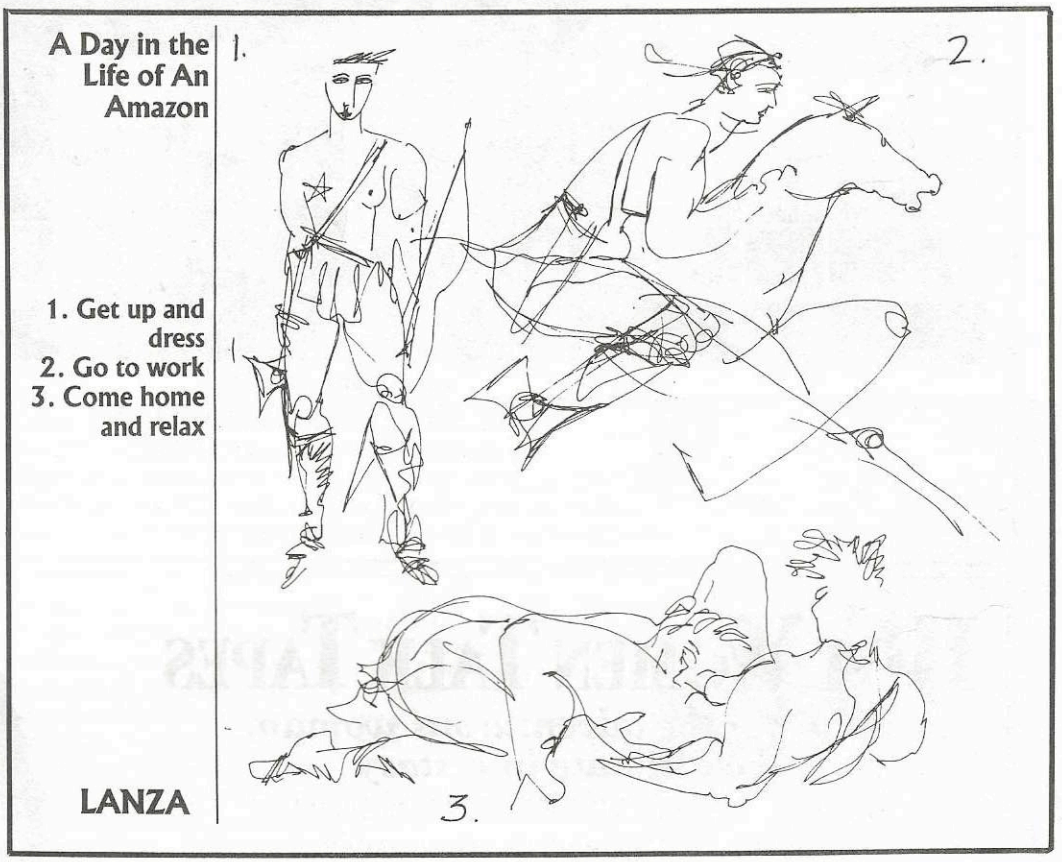
You have my complete support and I am turning all my friends on to *On Our Backs*.

*L.L.*
*Ithica, NY*

**Hurrah! Hurrah! Pant, pant!** Goodie, goodie and Wow! The summer edition is the first I have seen of you, but assuredly not the last.

The year of the lustful lesbian is overdue and most welcome with no less than open arms, open legs and wagging tongues. On with the celebration of our sexuality and our lives!

*M.R.*
*Davenport, IA*




**I love the perversion** index of your magazine, and look forward to each coming issue. Good work, girls!

Any chance of having a few really sleazy and explicit photos in each issue?

I LOVE the name! The subtle (?) dig at that other prude newspaper makes me giggle!

*A.C.*
*Somerville, MA*

**Hi! This is a letter and contribution** from down under — yes, Australia.

I am a 24-year-old dyke who was totally thrilled by finding your publication in a women's bookstore in Melbourne. (My girlfriend actually bought it for me when she saw how wrapped up in it I was.) The lesbian scene in Australia is predominantly feminist as well, and a publication such as yours is a complete "no-no" to them. However, I don't believe (and I consider myself a feminist) in oppressing women again within our own movement.

I find that it is the more radical feminist/lesbian who rejects such a publication. I am about to embark on a sister magazine to yours, and hope we will have a long lasting written relationship!

*Bobby*
*Melbourne, Australia*

**What an exciting project** you are working on! I received a copy of *On Our Backs* yesterday and was very surprised. It's a long over-due addition to the growing group of women's businesses that look at serving the lesbian community as a business and not a political statement. Your new publication shows the basics of a well-run professional organization. Three cheers!

I must compliment you on your cover design. You would have been hard pressed to find a more attractive back to represent you. I wish you luck and success in your endeavor.

*A.O.*
*Denver, CO*

**Vancouver is anxiously awaiting** issue 3!

Keep up the great team work, girls!

*A. & A.*
*Vancouver, Canada*

**When we were in** San Francisco in March, we were fortunate enough to see the flyer for your Spring Erotic Revue and GO!!

It was wonderful, the BEST! Please give Lizzy Boredom a

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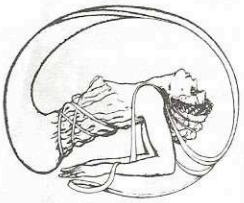

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kiss for me!

I loved the magazine, especially the Phantom Knights story. Truly my sex life has "blossomed," and I see myself as a beautiful butch (and so do many lucious women). I discovered that in Provincetown, MA over Labor Day weekend.

*R.W.*
*Massachusetts*

**Thank you** so very much for *On Our Backs*. Can anyone ever know how precious this magazine is to me? All this love I have in my heart for other women, and all this pride I have for being lesbian was just all bottled up for so many years. It took a long time to be able to DO something with that love; to express it in a sexual way that left me satisfied. Part of the problem was being ashamed and embarrassed, and the other part was not quite knowing what to do. When I started to feel okay with my fantasies and let myself create more and more elaborate ones, things started to change quite rapidly, which was a surprise to me. It's not necessary to act out these fantasies, just fantasizing them when I am coming is satisfying, and was. In fact, I am able to come quicker and almost every time I make love because my fantasies help. Only one woman I have known felt comfortable talking about sex and playing out a fantasy (I was a young adolescent boy and she was my girlfriend and I used a dildo that she had brought over). Unfortunately, after a short affair she moved away.

Anyway, your magazine has supported my feelings and recent discoveries that sex is okay. I know my fantasies are okay and I am forcing myself to talk about sex with my friends and partners. Doing this always turns out feeling good. Also, your magazine gives me other hints, which is great. Thanks for being lesbian lust out of the closet!

*P.O.*
*Tampa, FL*

**I liked the art** photos by Masako in issue 1. You need more reports on lesbian sex happenings, the bar scene, conferences and articles that are "thought" pieces, such as Joan Nestle's "Sexual Courage in the 1950's," and other explorations of why things turn us on and what that means and less emphasis on power/domination — that doesn't turn me on at all!

We support all women's desires and the exploration of all persuasions but we felt what we like wasn't there. We want strong, lusty sex but leather turns us off as do dildos. So, we liked Nestle and Stein's articles best. We want to talk about where we want women's sexuality to go. We want to go beyond the anti-s/m pro-s/m debate, go beyond saying where we are, and talk about how to move, what we want in our lesbian utopias, do we want leather and chains in our lesbian world? If so, great, but if not, why not, and how do we get there and even more — what's stopping us?

I am a Victorian historian and am quite curious about what handkerchiefs and Victorian scenes are? Maybe this is for me and I'm missing out. Also, we found the Fanny Fatale article "Phantom Knights" thought provoking and we wonder how much of that is real because we don't have access to that in our town and you are in San Francisco. It raises a lot of questions about butch/femme which both of us are still grappling with.

*H.P.*
*Seattle, WA*

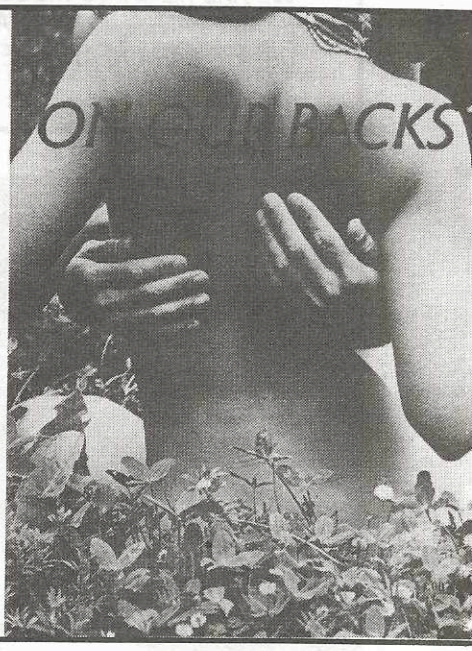
**Recently our office received** a copy of your new magazine, *On Our Backs*. Congratulations at the bold honesty of a womyn's collage long overdue!

I am a lesbian woman working for the *Cascade Voice* and the community in general to try and increase womyn's awareness for the opportunities that are offered to them at this time. Your magazine is one such opportunity.

For a week now I have had your magazine on my coffee table at home. Many womyn have seen and shown a great interest in *On Our Backs*, since we, at this time, have nothing similar to it.

Sincerely and best of luck.

*C.P.*
*Seattle, WA*



In the confusion of production, *ON OUR BACKS* forgot to credit **Dawn Lewis's** gorgeous cover photography for Issue 2, Fall 1984. That same mindless fervor caused us to drop the credit from **Sine Anahita's** tasty picnic scene, which appeared on page **10** and on the Table of Contents. Our apologies and thanks to both artists.

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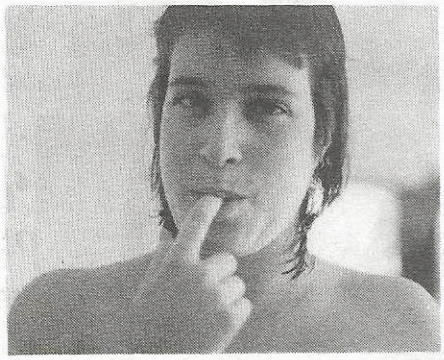

# BIG APPLE VIBRATIONS

**SUSIE BRIGHT**

### *Susie Sexpert Reports:*

Just back from a whirlwind tour of New York City and there's plenty to tell. *On Our Backs* threw five public events in the space of eight days, not to mention installing our filthy rag in a dozen new locations and soliciting all manners of new contributors, advertisers, and gasping admirers.

I suppose my favorite event was the Sex Talk Speak Out, which was designed as a sort of Confidential Pajama Party without the sleeping bags. I broke up the group into pairs of women who were strangers to one another. (Once again, in this community it's nearly impossible.) I proceeded to ask these new couplettes some extremely personal questions that are none of my bizniz: A) What has been your most RECENT sexual experience (alone or with partner[s]) and B) Describe a sexual fantasy you've had in detail and then answer this: Would you do this fantasy in a minute if you had the chance? Or would you act it out under very particular conditions, such as the right lover, the right lubricant, or the night in Paris? OR, is it one of those fantasies which would be absurd or physically impossible in real life?

After the pairs answered these questions to each other, we reopened the group as a whole, and then the fur really flew! What a superb evening. At one point I asked for a show of hands as to how many women there used sex toys, and I think the vote was unanimously YES. I'm not surprised considering the number of vibrator shops friendly to women on that one tiny island. One woman said she played with her collection of more than *200* silk scarves, and this item really sums up the New York experience — there is more of anything and everything you can think of. Including gorgeous women. I would like to thank a few of these outstanding amazons: Rikki Ann, for her magic phone call that changed our lives; Marcia, for organizing our beautiful party that gave NY dykes their first taste of Lesbian burlesque; Bobbi and Irene, for "Most Likely to Be Hot in an Urban Setting"; Joyce James, "Best Former English Teacher Now in the Sex Business"; Gosnell and Angela for the best hospitality and dildo making in or outside of Flatbush; and Joan Nestle, who introduced and toured us through the Lesbian Herstory Archives — the only time in New York City that I truly felt overwhelmed.

I would like Toys For Us readers to answer the same questions I asked the New York Sex Talk Speak Out. Address your replies to Susie Sexpert, c/o *On Our Backs*, and I will print them in the raw, perhaps with a few exacting comments.

So we have time for one letter? Rita from Santa Cruz has this to ask:

*Dear S-S,*

*I'm worried that if I start using a vibrator I'm not going to be able to ever quit it and come naturally again. I know one lady who can only have an orgasm with her Magic Wand, and I don't want to end up like her.*

***Restless Rita***

Dear Rusty,

Unlike free-basing or biting your nails, using a vibrator is neither physiologically addictive nor a nervous habit. We live in an addict-prone culture and often something hardly seems worth doing if you can't get hooked on it, but I think you will find vibrators to be a liberating experience.

First off, most humans tend to find a sexual pattern of expression that they cling to like a leaf once they find that it reliably gives them an orgasm. For instance, yours truly masturbated from ages 8 to 18 in the exact same position: belly down, hand crammed under a perfectly rigid body with my one social finger moving over the head of my clit. This wasn't such a bad position for a child, but as I grew bigger this practice nearly broke my arm and caused me much grief. I didn't know how else to have an orgasm and my futile tries at other methods were a bust.

My first vibrator experience on the other hand was a tremendous awakening because I found I could enjoy its intensity in all kinds of ways I had never felt before. Vibrators BROKE my "sex pattern" and once I made this first big change, all sorts of subtle and more outrageous variations opened up to me. I think you will find plenty of women with the same story.

Yes, vibrators will often let you come faster than other methods. (Although a hot fantasy in the hand will still beat an apathetic vibrator in the bush. But just imagine combining the best of both worlds!)

For women who feel they are getting stuck in a rut with their vibrator, or any other sex practice you believe has become an annoying habit, try the "Stop &

Continued on page 39

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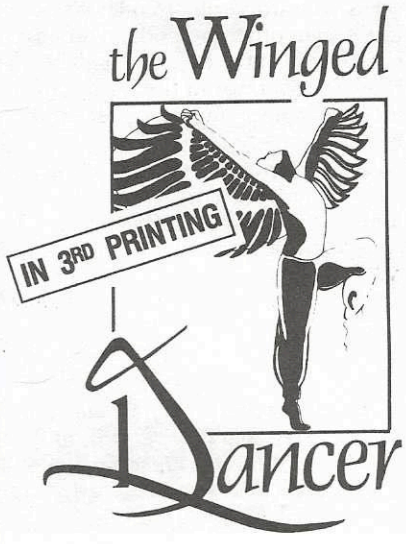

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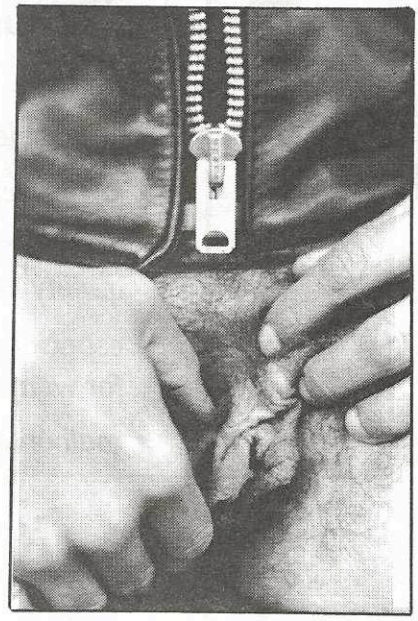
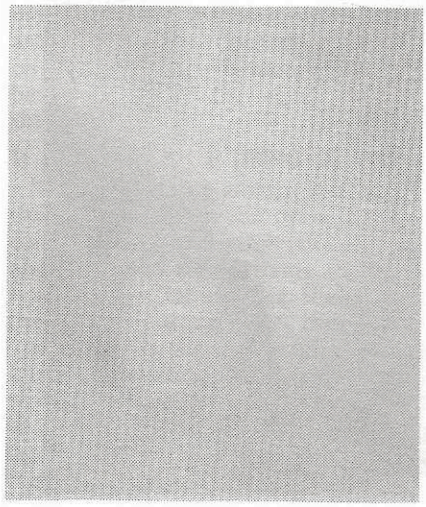


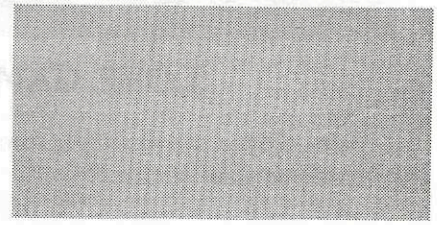
# 3 HOT NUMBERS

## KATE SCHUMACHER

IT WAS LATE AT NIGHT. I WAS DRIVING, DISTRACTED, filled with lust, and feeling the absence of the leather thong that had been run through my crotch for most of the night. Jane was teasing the hell out of me by playing with Sally, who was sitting between us. With one eye on the road, I watched Jane's hand slip slowly between the buttons of Sally's shirt. I ran my hand up Sally's thigh; she smiled and sank lower in the seat. Jane kissed Sally deeply and slid her hand between her legs. No words were spoken. It was hard to concentrate on driving the car. I attempted to slide my hand into Sally's crotch alongside Jane's but she pushed me away. She indicated I was not to touch Sally's cunt without her consent. Jane unzipped Sally's jeans and fingered her wetness. Jane smiled and licked the cunt juice from her fingers. Our scents filled the air. Headlights glared; hard to remember I was driving. Jane grabbed my hand and guided it to Sally's cunt. My fingers smoothly slid into her silky wetness. She sank deeper in the seat as I stroked her hot dripping cunt and Jane continued to kiss and caress her face, neck and breasts. Sally moaned and wriggled under my hand. She thrust hard against my hand and silently came. I continued to gently stroke her all the way home.



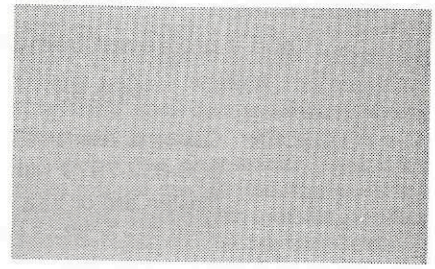
I ORDER YOU TO THE BATHROOM... I FORCE you to lay in the tub... a few inches of warm water to keep you from being chilled... I shuck my pants... I squat in the tub over you... suck my cunt, bitch... you suck... you lick... open your mouth wider, I order... you comply... I piss in your mouth... you try to pull away... I grasp your head firmly in my hands... my thumbs in your mouth... holding open your jaws... forcing you to drink... piss runs down your cheeks... your neck... your chest... splashing into the bathwater... swirling around your body... you stop fighting... you swallow what's left in your mouth... your arms reach up to me... you sob and thank me for so much pleasure... I am pleased...



YOU LOOK SO FRESH AND LOVELY IN YOUR long calico dress, apron and bare feet. I'm wearing my sweatstained chaps, boots, bandana, and Stetson. My breasts are half-exposed under my worn leather vest.

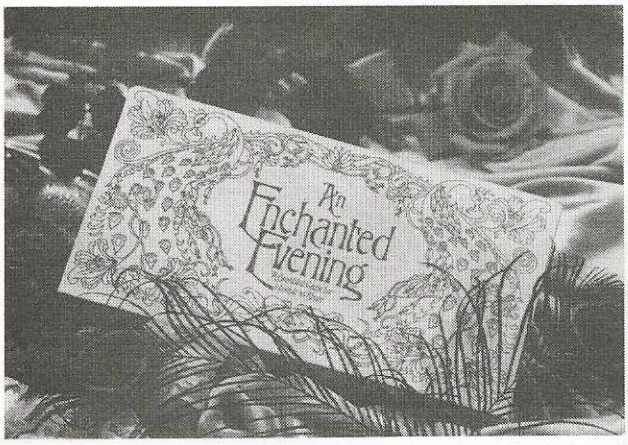
I lean on the stall door and watch you sweep loose, fragrant hay. You move slowly, magnificently; unaware of my presence, the glint in my eyes. You're bent over, back to me, as I silently enter the stall. Your beauty takes my breath away. I firmly lay one hand on your ass and hold your head down with the other. I command you to be still. You know how painful the punishment is if you disobey. I massage your ass as I rub my body against your thigh.

Suddenly, I yank you upright with a firm twist of your hair. Tears well up in your eyes. Roughly I shove you over a nearby bale of hay. You pant as I slowly lift layer after layer of skirt and slips over your back. I slowly, so slowly, expose your exquisitely massive buttocks. I unclip the whip from my belt loop and trail it up between you legs, softly, slowly. You moan.....



*The Fantasy Correspondence column is for our readers to share their most secret sexual fantasies. Pen off a titillating tidbit to us anytime.*

PHOTOGRAPH / DAWN LEWIS

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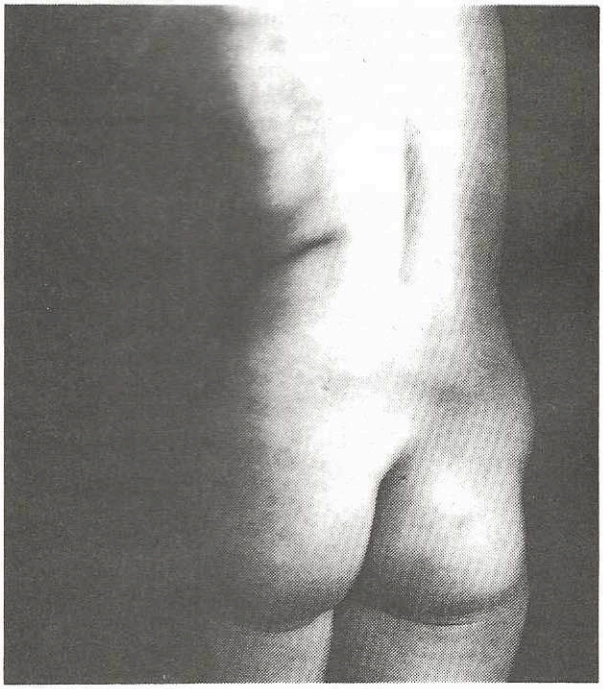


©Clare Wren

**TAKE CARE OF YOUR SENSUOUS SELF**

# AN HONEST LULLABYE

## L. HAGEN

### I OBJECTIVITY

*A memory*: When I was seven or eight my parents inherited the possessions of a friend who had recently died. These included a large stack of Playboys. I remember being fascinated by them, and spent long hours ensconced in a chair reading what I could but mostly looking at the pictures, over and over again. My parents laughed about it, but I was serious: eventually, the magazines disappeared. Soon after I started masturbating.

*A habit*: Despite my objections to being stuffed into a sex role, I shamelessly like sewing. What I like best about it, though, is going to look at patterns, a very public activity. For an hour or two I can be in the center of an exclusive all-women's club, elbow to elbow with the fair sex and in a perfect position to start up a conversation. And we're all there for one reason: to look. To spend a few blissful minutes looking at pictures of sexy women looking back at us, posing, posturing, beckoning, promising... and *nobody's* ashamed. Could this be... the pornographic imagination?

*A question*: Did I become a lesbian at 10, when I beat up all the boys and fell in love with the rival girl gang leader? (I offered to give her my boyfriend if she would come over and play). Or wasn't it until a women's studies class I took gave me a definition and a political position, and I started beginning sentences with the words, "As a socialist-feminist lesbian, I..." Or when I learned what *not* to say, as when the lesbian community boycotted a local gay dance bar to protest the "pornographic" images of women pasted on the bathroom ceiling, and I didn't say, "But they turn me on..." Was I freer — or more ignorant — before I learned the word "censorship"?

### II WATCH YOUR TONGUE

Sex is one of those subjects you have to think about before you bring it up in conversation — and weigh your chances ahead of time for surviving the reactions. I know, for instance, that if I use the word "pornography" instead of "eroticism" to talk about explicit sexual images (including those created by women) one of three things will happen: 1) My upstanding lesbian friends will freeze and look at me as if after I've left they'll wash my cup in extra hot sudsy water. 2) My straight feminist friends will do a rundown of why censorship is ok and even necessary at certain times, without being able to tell me exactly what it is they object to because, face it, they've only ever seen pornography in WAVPAM's slide show and that was 5 years ago. 3) Someone will leave the room and later spread the word that I'm working on an S/M rag and spend all my money on sex toys.

As my friend the vibrator saleswoman will tell you, the latter is hardly true. But the fact is, these reactions occur like clockwork, and although I'm not a sexual pioneer by any stretch of the imagination, I'm beginning to wonder what convent I entered when I came out six years ago. Why do lesbians have such a hard time talking about sex? And does it have nothing, or everything, to do with being a woman?

Susan Griffin and Andrea Dworkin (feminist anti-porn activists) can spend hours and hours, or maybe their entire careers, talking about things that turn people on, but they're against it — which makes them easy candidates for the Good Housekeeping seal of approval. These women have managed to make the word "pornography" synonymous with "woman-hating," and to throw a slimy cast on anything concerned with sleaze, raunch, fetishes, etc., not to mention giving sex itself a suspicious tinge. When I think of feminist-defined sex these days, I get this murky image of women on the brink of martyrdom politely rolling in clean sheets in a passionless (and penetrationless) embrace.

If it's a poor caricature, it's only because I know so well what I *can't* do as a feminist (supposedly). But defining sex only in negative terms won't make the world turn anymore, if it ever could. Somebody has to take a chance and create, if only to get people talking again. What's surprised me in the time I've been involved with *On Our Backs* is the unwillingness on the part of our readers/reactors to do something other than rave wholeheartedly or condemn without mercy. Where are those demanding but loving letters, or those sincere objections? Requests, visions, wild fantasies — when I dream about women they're talking, so what is everybody waiting for?

### III THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL

So why do I work on a lesbian sex magazine, anyway? Well, it sure as hell isn't for fame or fortune, and it's not to please my parents. The truth is, repression makes me itch. My generation of feminist baby dykes claimed sexuality as their least important characteristic (what — me? have sex?). A coming out climate like that can leave you high and dry (not to mention guilty) for years. Working on this magazine has been for me a serious attempt to change this situation.

But it's also for the sheer pleasure of it. Yeah, I *like* looking at pictures of naked women — I always have. And the fact that I can support women artists and writers and sex workers and manufacturers and small business owners at the same time is great!

And lest you, dear reader, think it's a plum job, let me tell you: the work is a challenge. Learning to look for graphics and photographs that are truly sexually exciting has not exactly been easy, because basically there are no guidelines out there for the lesbian pornographer.

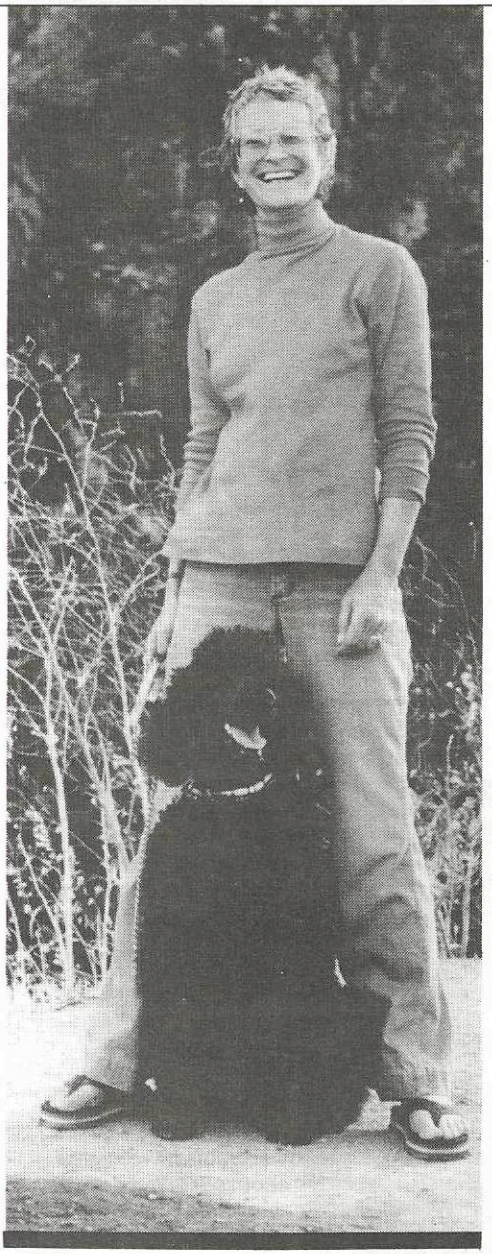
Continued on page 39

Sex Point *is a regular feature which explores contemporary issues of sexuality.* On Our Backs *welcomes your views.*

GRAPHIC / LAURIE WHITE

# A Talk with Sex Pioneer

*IF ANYONE IS WONDERING WHETHER THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION EVER REALLY HAPPENED, OR WHETHER WOMEN HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT, THEY HAVE YET TO MEET SALLY BINFORD. SALLY HAS BEEN A SEXUAL RADICAL, ACTIVIST, AND EDUCATOR FOR A GOOD NUMBER OF HER 60 YEARS. SHE IS PRESENTLY LIVING ON THE ROAD IN AN RV WITH HER WOMAN LOVER, AND HER STANDARD SIZE POODLE, JAKE. EDITOR SUSIE BRIGHT HAD A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW MS. BINFORD SHORTLY BEFORE SHE TOOK OFF INTO THE SUNSET!*



# SALLY BINFORD

**Susie:** What kind of sexual person were you raised to be? By your family's standards, who would you be sexually today?

**Sally:** I would probably be asexual if I were raised according to my parents' standards. It was assumed that I was heterosexual and would get married and to a nice student doctor or something like that. I don't want to talk about my parents as they got middle-aged, but rather as they were when I was little. At that time my parents were relatively avant garde. They were not religious and I was taught my body was natural and so forth. I was told the facts of life when I was eight years old but nothing was ever said, that I recall, about masturbation. I do remember clearly the day I discovered my clitoris. I was three years old and I knew that wonderful feeling I got when I played with it was something I should only do in private. I don't know where I ever got that impression, nothing was ever said.

**Susie:** Did you ever play sex games when you were a kid?

**Sally:** Oh, yes. My cousin, who is about my age, he and I played doctor for hours. I played with a couple of girlfriends when I was about nine or ten but stopped when we found out what queers were at summer camp.

**Susie:** How did you find that out?

**Sally:** Well, there was this enormous counselor, our bunk counselor, the summer I was eleven. I remember one male counselor saying to watch out for her because she was queer. This was unusual, you know. Queers were unusual. Then someone's older brother informed us what queer meant. We were absolutely flabbergasted. From that point on we were all very careful not to appear queer.

**Susie:** What was your image of what it was to be a female queer?

**Sally:** To be very butch.

**Susie:** Tell us more about your clitoral discovery at age 3.

**Sally:** Well, my sister was older than I was and she no longer had to take an afternoon nap, but I did. I remember it was summer in a place that we had with green shades pulled down. The bed was nice and cool and dark. One day I was playing with myself and I found this wonderful spot. I discovered it was really great to play with it for the whole hour of my "nap." As I said, I knew somehow this was something that I shouldn't do in front of my sister or mother. My sister and I shared the bedroom. But I spent many happy afternoons not going to sleep, just playing with myself.

BAR LIFE IN GENERAL DOESN'T TURN ME ON. POKER PARTIES AND ORGIES ARE WHERE IT'S AT.

MY MAIN ARGUMENT WITH THE (ANTI-PORN FEMINISTS) IS NOT THAT PORN WILL LEAD TO RAPE, BUT THAT MOST PORN WILL LEAD TO BOREDOM.

**Susie:** Have you masturbated ever since? Has it changed? Do you do it in the same way?

**Sally:** Yes, to 1. My big technological breakthrough was in the '50's when vibrators came in. Essentially my masturbation pattern was the same from childhood until I got my first vibrator.

**Susie:** What did the vibrator allow you to do?

**Sally:** In the first place, the vibrator guaranteed orgasm every time I masturbated, and much faster. If I was in a hurry, a vibrator was a great help because I just wanted to get off. Also, as I say, it was 100% sure. With my finger, things would interfere; the outside world would appear. But with the vibrator, that buzz, (the early vibrators were noisy) would shut out the outside world.

**Susie:** How did you discover using vibrators for sex?

**Sally:** Someone told me about it, a male friend who had been to a stag show and seen a couple of women doing each other with vibrators. I rushed right down to Marshall Fields in Chicago the next day and bought a vibrator.

**Susie:** Do you remember what kind it was?

**Sally:** Yes. It was an Oster hand-held. I was in love with that vibrator for about ten years until it finally burned out.

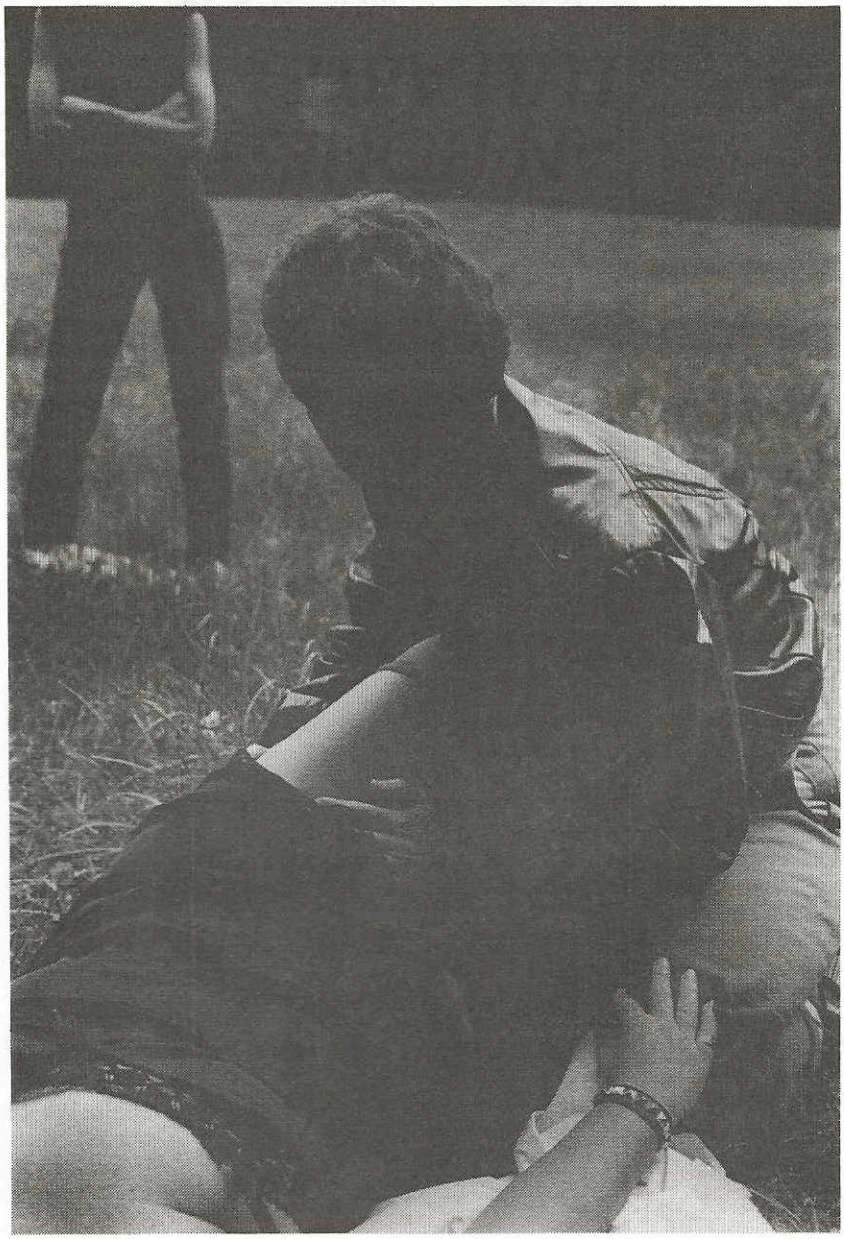
**Susie:** What other sex toys have you enjoyed besides your Oster hand-held? Are you strictly a vibrator person or do you enjoy other accoutrements?

**Sally:** I would say I'm 99% of the time a vibrator person. There was a hairbrush I used to have that had a handle that was slightly curved, and that handle was wonderful to put inside me while I vibrated. I realized when all this fuss started about the G-spot, that that curved handle was great for the G-spot.

**Susie:** When did you first know that you were attracted to women?

Continued on page 38

CERTAIN PARTS OF CENTRAL PARK ARE ALMOST DESERTED.



# PICNIC

# ONE WEEKDAY MORNING, WHILE EVERYONE ELSE

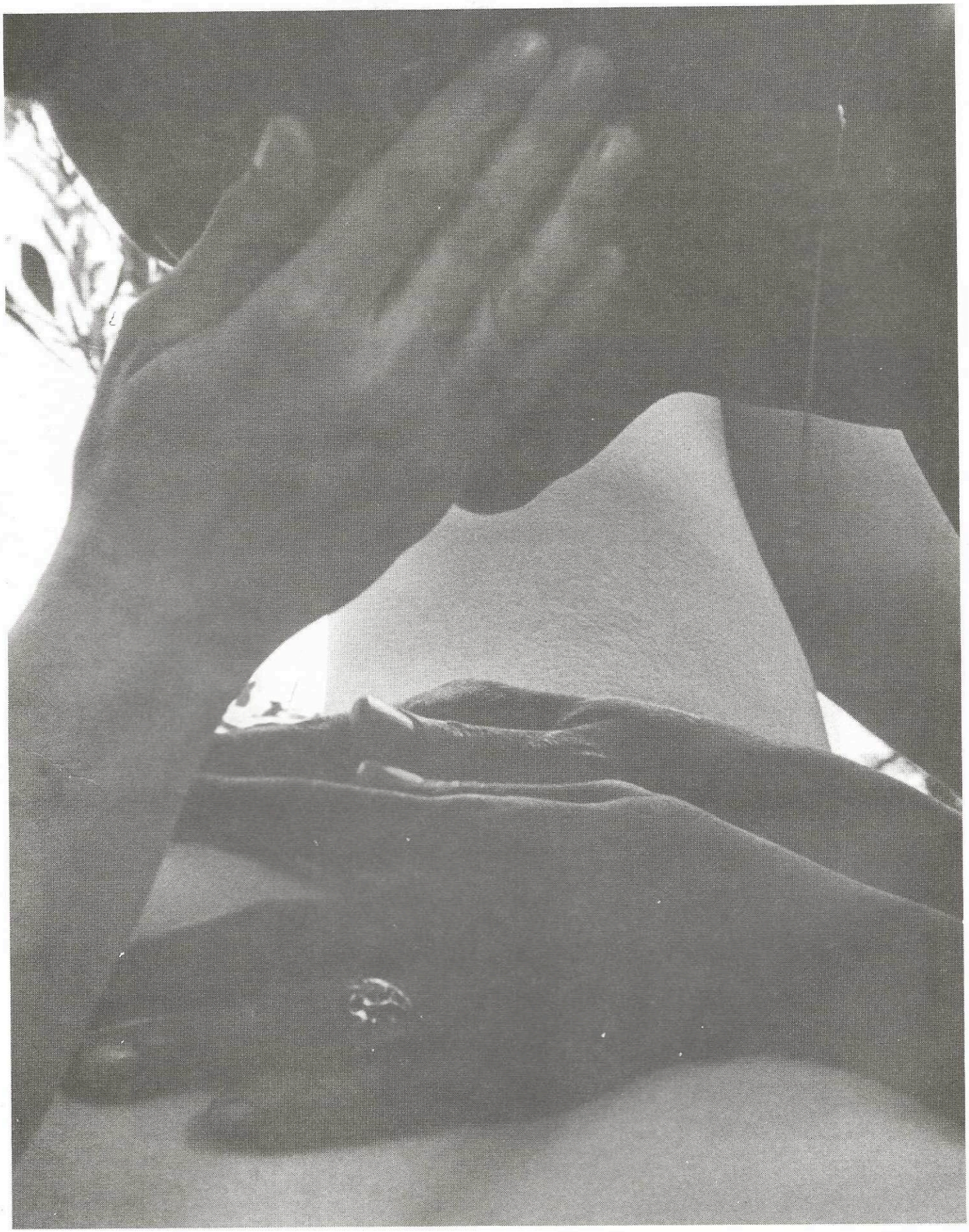
# PHOTOGRAPHY BY MORGAN GWENWALD

# WENT TO WORK, LIZ AND CHRIS DIDN'T.

# LIZ FORGOT THE THERMOS, AND CHRIS DIDN'T

# THINK THEY NEEDED A TABLECLOTH.

# EVERYTHING TASTES SO MUCH BETTER OUTSIDE.



*PHOTOGRAPH* / **TEE CORINNE**

THE STORY OF A GIRL AND HER BATHTUB

# SARA

*Short Fiction by Daji Shook*

I TOOK THE APARTMENT BECAUSE OF THE BATH TUB. I'll admit it; I've never pretended otherwise. That hollow husk of chalky porcelain, cornsilk smooth, elevated by talons teasing globes, has become the route of my Fantastic Voyages in which I plunge deep into tear ducts, suds-up in the foamy white of the human eye, and pull out, saline-soft, no regrets. It is there that I see Sara, and all else becomes peripheral vision. It is there that I become eyeless, that my senses are displaced, that I see and speak through the places between my legs, through the many, massive regions there.

I have paced the length of that bath tub, splashing loose frustration, misery, ennui. I have dozed in the cool basin on searing summer nights. My mind has been boomeranged awake by dreams of her; my body stiffened to consciousness by recollections of holding Sara in liquid, between my legs, tasting pearls. In that place I have learned the love of flavors under water, sexual favors under pelting rain.

I love sex, and I love being done with it. But Sara was not one to let me off that easily; hauling me into the shower after our long episodes of sexual play to give me so much extra that it passed beyond my need to her victory. She gave me more — more than I could possibly endure, and more than I could ever decline.

The sensation of sucking liquor from chocolate vials; of being surprised, rewarded, and having it over with. For long, long minutes she sucked me, sucked me with her lips and gums and the sides of her teeth, sucked me with her hands and fingers, with the bone of her wrist, between her breasts and below her belly. She pulled at every surface, at each moment of skin, until I was inside-out on the bed, shivering, my bones become beasts. And she pulled off me, defying gravity, while my cunt squinted hard not to lose sight of her.

And now, a span of sheet between us, she on her side, head and hair clenched casually in hand, watching me recover. Her breath slow as an oar becoming heavy in the shallows.

Catching my breath on my ribs' sticky branches, catching my breath like a tourniquet claiming blood: I re-collect what I have tossed off and given away, I take myself back, and let loose what I have taken in this great, desirable swindle of flesh. We each return to ourselves, an ambivalent reunion.

There have been times when I have wished for the strength of a machine, when I wanted endurance beyond the endurance of desire and need, indefatigable concentration. To take a licking and keep on ticking. The potency of my need for sex exhilerates me; the limitations of my physical and imaginative energies disappoint. There is great sweetness in having had enough, in being unable to take more, in being — briefly — released from wanting. But this is a rest Sara does not allow, a peace which she finds unconvincing. For her, the calm of satiation is a bully, a little death. What gift's left, she asks, for the girl who has everything?

And so it is that my body's breath is barely slowed, pleasure barely shed, when her hand moves under my neck as soft and light as a sparrow's belly, and begins to rub a nest into the bend there, where desire stirs, suggesting again to my body: You can fly. Fly.

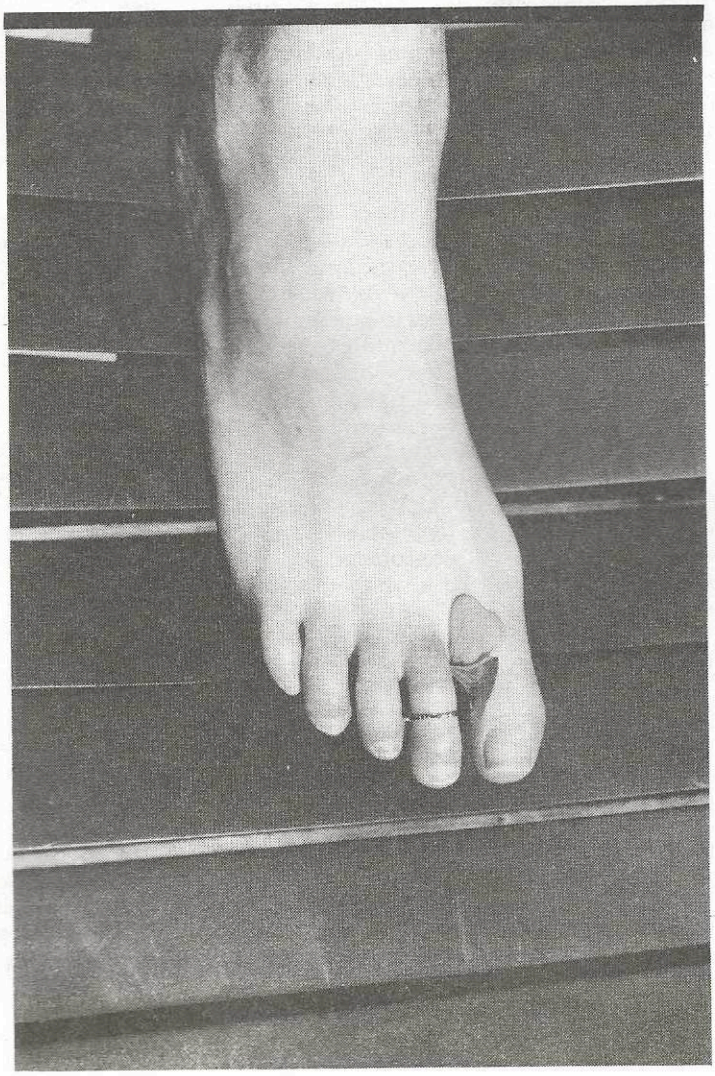
We are in the shower, bouyant with the noise of flashing water, and I am making good on an earlier promise: to return Sara's favors with a vengeance should she pry me from my moments of luxurious respite after my abrupt and clenching orgasms have smoothed. My hand aches inside her; she comes more slowly when standing up. My cramping fingers sprawl like witnesses to my commitment both to pleasing her and to carrying through on my lovely threat. Her wet skin sponges against me; my hand clings to her leathery bone, curling inside her tight swelterings.

The cave salamander is eyeless, but knows well her way; stay where it is wet, swivel boldly there, then stir ever so slightly. Press hard and insistently when the bones and walls suckle at the flesh, when the cave paintings gush silver and honey: be stoic and remain when the cavern mouth opens and shuts, pronouncing the words More More More.

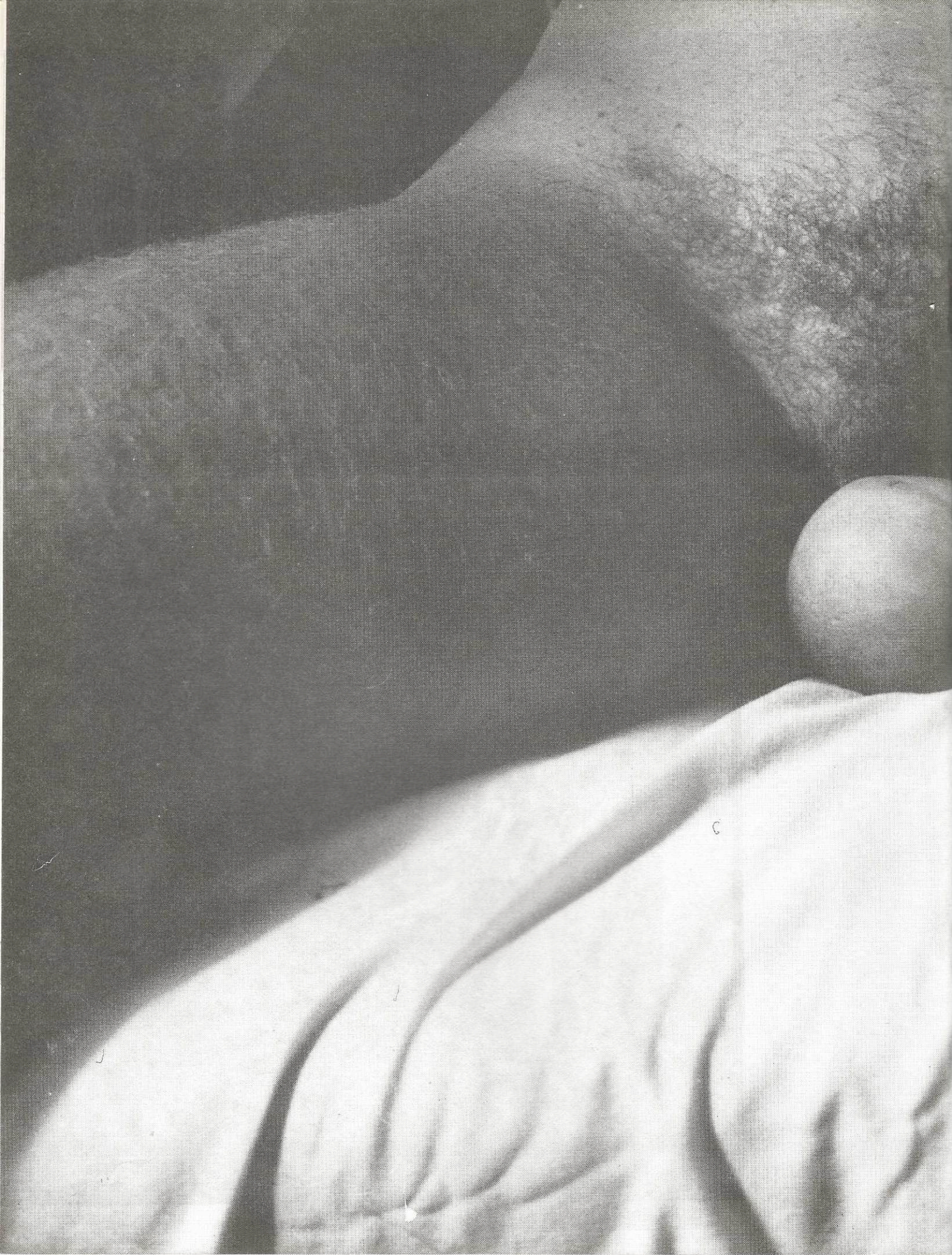
What do you call a woman who you took pictures of every day for six months?

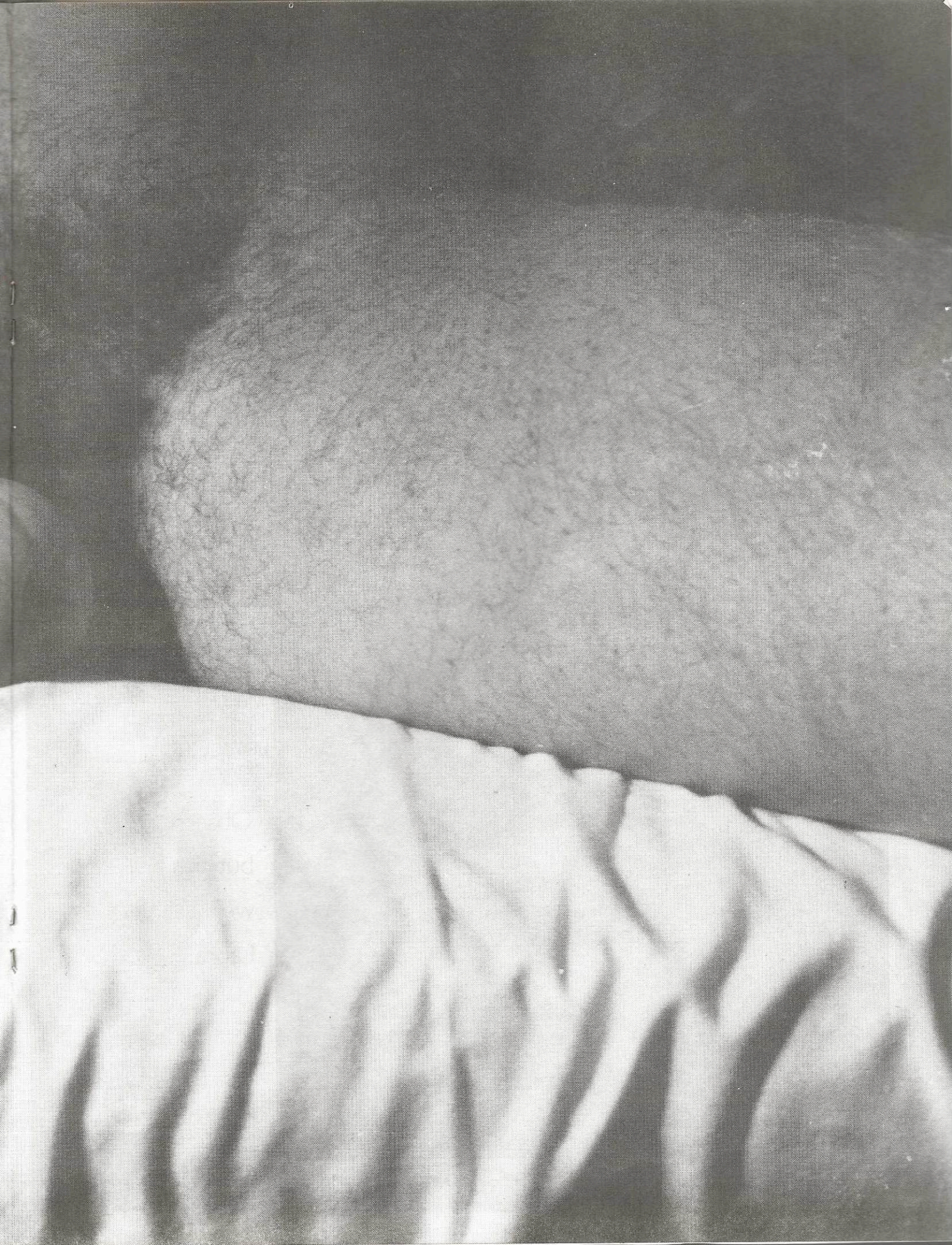
# LAURA

BY SEAN REYNOLDS



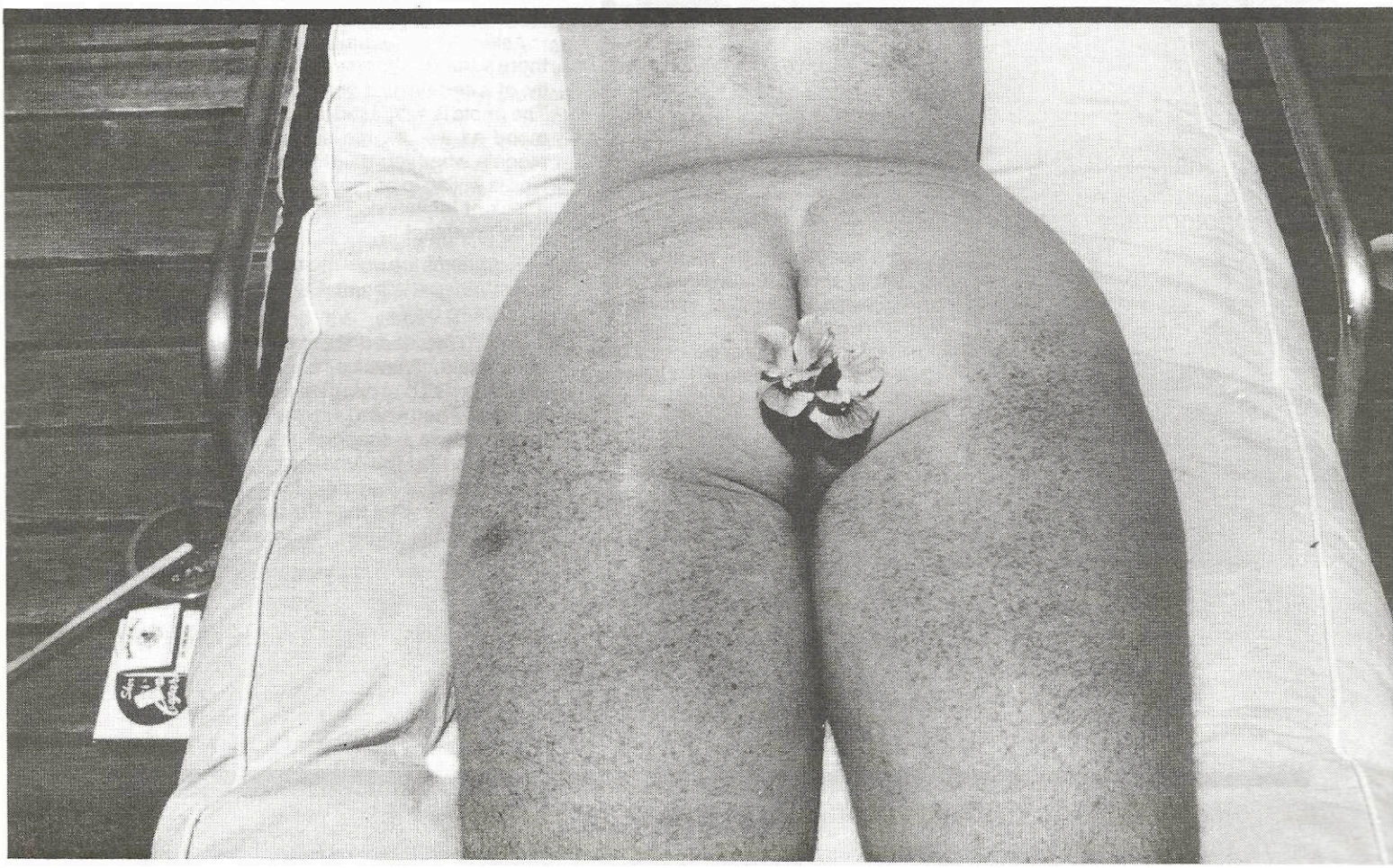
What is it about a woman who has more freckles than you could count for the rest of your life?





Why do certain summer memories last all winter long?

Some call it Obsession, but this time, we'll call her Laura.



# SEAN REYNOLDS

*On Our Backs could not resist an interview with Sean Reynolds, our featured centerfold photographer. Sitting at her sunny kitchen table, Sean proved to be a talented gossip, historian, and interpreter of her photocentric career.*

**ON OUR BACKS**: Let's start with the essentials...

**SEAN**: Triple Virgo. I am a FIEND for organization.

When and where did this extraordinary astrology begin?

I was born in 1950, Chicago, the South Side where I also grew up.

How did you become interested in photography?

I always loved shadow and light. I was originally interested in black and white film, but I didn't end up pursuing it. In film you have to talk to too many people.

I think my first memory of loving film was when I was six years old. I went to see "The Blue Angel" with Marlene Dietrich and I was never the same.

Is this also the moment when you started loving women?

Exactly. I knew I was going to that theater for more than the popcorn.

Do you do very much sexually-oriented photography? What's sexy to you in a picture?

I'm a people/portrait photographer, so it all seems relatively sexual to me. I've also shot almost exclusively women. Erotica for me has nothing to do with nudity or attractiveness, but rather a particular feeling that's been created. That's why so many things are erotic.

What is your version of pornography vs. erotica?

Porn is *sleazier*, it's... dripping. I love porn, I love the willingness to do it, although I don't think I've ever created it myself. These photos in *On Our Backs* are erotic, not porn to me; although the Moral Majority would probably feel differently.

What makes for a talented photographer? How much does the model have to do with it?

The simple answer is high standards. I cannot stand people who call themselves photographers just because they have a camera in their hands. You have to keep constantly taking pictures and, in a manner of speaking, you need to listen to other people's music. I've been mostly influenced by other black artists: Ozier Mohammed, Mikki Ferrill, James Vanderzee. Diane Arbus is an exception.

Aside from technical expertise, there's the development of sensitivity, of a certain kind of introspection. The photo is supposed to reflect your mood as well as the subject. With models what you need is someone who is willing to be manipulated, and a lack of inhibition. The willingness to do anything!

This seems the right moment to ask about Vanessa Williams. Care to throw in your two bits?

When I first heard about the whole deal, I said, "Vanessa, honey, don't give it up. Tell that pageant to eat shit and die." Then when I saw the photos in *Penthouse* I changed my mind. Obviously the Miss America pageant didn't get what they paid for — and that's exactly what they do, they buy their precious queen. Vanessa's a

# talks back!

hot cookie and obviously she has some weird conflicts with her career aspirations. But she's got it made now anyway. Who remembers last year's Miss America?

Do you want to know who I think is sexy?

Yes!

My lover Cathy, and my therapist, who will die when she sees this. Cicely Tyson is hot. So is Jacqueline Bisset. Linda Evans is sexy now, but way back on *The Big Valley*, Barbara Stanwyck was IT.

We get regular letters from a dyke who has sent us several samples of her Linda Evans photo collection. It must be some underground trend.

In a more serious vein, we want you to tell our audience what you're currently working on.

My writing and photos have been regularly featured in *Coming Up!* (an S.F. lesbian/gay newspaper) and I've recently been documenting the Narratives Performing Co. (a black women's traveling theater production). I'm doing two different photo essays: one on prostitutes, and the other on Roller Derby queens.

I remember where we first met you was at the Hookers Convention this summer. They planned their gathering for the same time as the Democrats had their shindig. Any political observations?

Yes. So far I have met six lesbians who voted for Reagan and I want to know why. Actually, I'm not a social crusader, even though I have a lot of opinions. I just want to take good photographs.

And on that humble note... Thanks, Sean, your photos are beautiful.

H.L. Cottrell

# REDFERN

**"No one at Redfern ever wears a nightgown," Jacqui said. "Except for first-year girls who are still babies. But since you're rooming with *me*, I assumed you wanted to be like *us*."**

JACQUI WAS THE FIRST PERSON I MET when I arrived at Redfern Academy. Due to some administrative foul-up I was assigned to be her roommate, even though she was three years older and two full grades ahead of me.

During dinner on that first night, I sat with Jacqui and her friends. My thirteen-year-old self was totally in awe of these sophisticated, self-assured fifteen and sixteen-year-olds. They chattered on about their summer vacations, new clothes, and girls they knew from last year, and I just sat and soaked it all in. No one paid any attention to me, except Jacqui, who sat at my right side constantly refilling my glass with apple juice from a heavy crystal decanter.

"Drink up," she urged, each time I indicated I had had enough. "It's very good for you."

After dinner, Jacqui took me on a tour of the campus grounds, showing me all the main buildings and classrooms. She kept up a lively flow of conversation, and I was impressed with her endless knowledge about our instructors' private lives.

When we returned to our dormitory it was quite late, and all the other girls seemed to be in their rooms already. As we passed the bathroom door, at the head of the staircase, I paused and said I'd just be a minute. Jacqui gripped my elbow, and her face took on a look of alarm and concern.

"No, Ellen, you're not allowed. It's after eight o'clock, and the bathroom is locked until morning. I'm so sorry. That's just the way it is." And she quickly led me down the hall and into our room.

It seemed like a terrible rule to me and I questioned Jacqui about it, saying I really had to go, especially after all the apple juice I'd consumed at dinner. Jacqui was sympathetic — she even apologized for giving me so much to drink, but she repeated that there was nothing that could be done about it, and suggested I think about something else until the urge passed.

Before long, Jacqui began to undress for the night. Her movements were quick and I envied the ease and grace with which she slipped out of her pleated skirt, half-slip and panties. I watched as she unbuttoned her blouse and removed her bra, noticing that she maintained eye contact with me the whole time. Jacqui had good reason to undress with such self-assurance. She had a lovely body, with large firm breasts that stood high and milky-white against the chestnut-brown of her suntanned neck, shoulders and stomach. I thought, wistfully, of the endless hours Jacqui must have spent sunbathing in a two-piece suit, while I'd been practically house-bound all summer, studying hard to pass Redfern's entrance examination. I felt shy of my pale flesh and hesitant to undress before Jacqui. I walked to the closet and took down a long flannel nightgown, thinking I would slip it over my shoulders and step out of my clothes under its protection.

Jacqui had followed me to the closet and now she was standing right beside me, a stern look in her eyes.

"No one at Redfern ever wears a nightgown," she said. "Except for first-year girls who are still babies. But since you're rooming with *me*, I assumed you wanted to be like *us*."

There was no way I could back down from that challenge, since I did want to

Continued on page 44

# ACADEMY

BY HANNAH GOLD

## Or, Ellen Goes to School With the Big Girls

GRAPHIC / **LAURIE WHITE**

# BOOK REVIEWS

***LÉGENDE***
*by Jeannine Allard*
*Alyson Publications*

*Jeannine Allard, Author of Legende: the Story of Philippa And Aurelie*

*Richard Swanson*

As a feminist who could never quite extinguish her fascination for romance novels, chivalry and long, flowing seethrough cotton dresses, discovering *Légende* by Jeannine Allard was like being swept off my feet by a knight in shining armour. But my knight, like *Légende*, was lesbian.

*Légende* is based on an old legend still told in Brittany. Through each character's own voice and persepctive of things, the story is told of how two women came to love each other and live together as husband and wife in a small coastal fishing village in the 1860s. The novel details the inner struggles of Phillippe/Phillippa, a woman who has to masquerade as a man in order to live the seafaring life she longs for. It is only through an accident at sea that she meets Aurelie and discovers that she is a woman who loves another woman.

This realization causes her to flee from Aurelie. But when she returns, she tells the bitter truth — "My name is Phillippa." And she continues with an emotional outpouring of love and devotion that did my poor, starved femme heart good. "I love you. I think that I have loved you since the first time that I saw you here. I want to live here with you, marry you, spend the rest of my life with you." Sigh.

They try to make it work, yet are not without their problems. Phillippe is devoutly Catholic, and believes in the power and beauty of the written word. Aurelie is the daughter of the town witch. Her god is the menhirs, the visionary stones. She believes in the wind and sea and the voices which speak to her. Together they discover the wonders of each other's world, and pass them both along to Aurelie's daughter, Mimi.

They live a content, happy life for many years, but the story does not have a happy ending. They fall victim to a tragedy of the times suffered by many.

*Légende* has the whimsical quality of stories told from another time and place. It allows us to create and romanticize our very own folk heroines.

Take a bit of this lesbian history to bed with you tonite.

**Fanny Fatale**

***THE WINGED DANCER***
*by Camerin Grae*
*Blazon Books*

I'm always on the look-out for a really well-crafted, literate mystery novel, featuring a lesbian feminist heroine. For that reason, *The Winged Dancer* was a real find.

Camerin Grae has learned much from her predecessors in this genre. She's aware that readers need a complex yet decipherable mystery plot to capture and hold their interest, but that a heroine with all her lesbian/feminist credentials totally in order can often be a bit of a bore.

What Grae has given us is a mystery featuring many classic ingredients: a maniacal killer, stolen documents, hidden treasure, a letter written in code (and, it follows, a missing code book), people who aren't who they seem to be, and high-level government corruption.

Grae departs from the traditional mystery model, however, in her creation of Kat Rogan. While Kat is cast as the novel's heroine, she is a most atypical sleuth. The victim of circumstances and whimsical, patriarchal laws, Kat spends the majority of the novel imprisoned.

Through her depiction of a mythical South American prison system, Camerin Grae is able to explore areas rarely handled in mystery novels or in contemporary lesbian/feminist fiction. Removed from the privileges and distractions of her ordinary routine, Kat is forced to come to grips with both the attraction and repulsion she feels towards relationships based on power and control. During the course of the novel she confronts the dicotomies in her own personality, as she defines them: masculine/feminine; dominant/submissive; father/mother; predator/prey; dark/light; top/bottom; victor/victim.

*The Winged Dancer* explores some of the psychological and sexual motivations which can affect the balance of power in a relationship. Because most of the action takes place under prison conditions, where choices are severely, if not totally, limited, the situations and interactions described are extreme ones. At times this distorts our understanding of Kat and leads to oversimplification and too-easy answers. But, for the most part, this novel succeeds in providing a framework within which the reader can explore the issue of power — and its abuse — in relationships among women.

**Irene Zahava**

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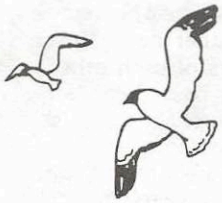

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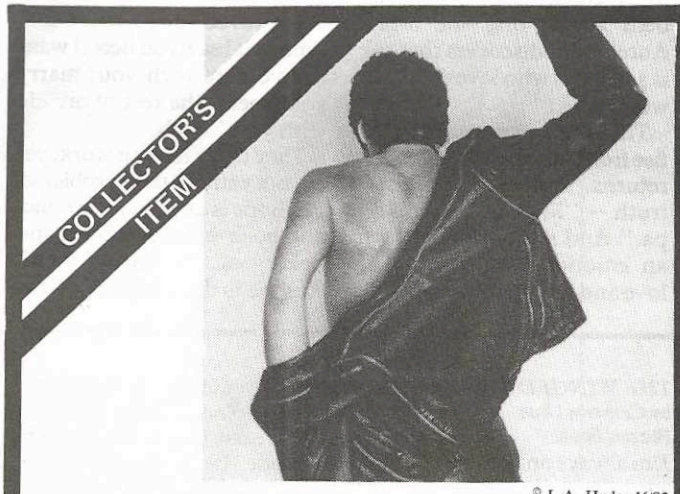


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*CLAIRE AND SANDY MOVED TO THE COUNTRY TO FIND A LITTLE SEXUAL INTIMACY IN THE WOODS.*

PHOTOS BY HONEY LEE COTTRELL

*ALONE WITH ONLY THE PINE TREES, CHIPMUNKS, AND A FEW HANDMADE RESTRAINTS, THIS INFATUATED COUPLE HAVE CREATED THEIR OWN NETHER-LEATHER WORLD. RURAL DECADENCE NEVER LOOKED MORE APPEALING.*

Continued from page 12

**Sally:** I was a red, white and blue heterosexual for years and years and years. I had a lot of gay friends and a few lesbians who came on to me, but I didn't feel interested at all. Then, let's see, I got into group sex in about 1964, and became curious about women but was still afraid to explore. It was the late sixties by the time I started playing with them in group sex, but always with men present. I had my first solo encounter with a woman when I was past 45.

**Susie:** Maybe I'll start asking you about the group sex and go back to that question later. This is something that you're notorious for. What attracted you to group sex? What makes for good group sex? Do you think it's something you're no longer attracted to or does it still have a special high for you?

**Sally:** I always had fantasies about group sex and that I was the only person kinky in the world who had such fantasies. When I married Lew, my third husband, we talked about our fantasies and it turned out we both had group sex fantasies. At that point the first magazines were coming out with personal ads; and after about a year of talking about it, we answered out first ad. Our first experience was a scream. This was 1964. I was teaching at Northeastern University, he was teaching at the University of Chicago. We were both very aware of our fantasy making us vulnerable in terms of people finding out and out jobs. We answered an ad from a town close to Chicago but not too close. We talked to these same people on the phone. They sounded wonderful and we were very turned on to the prospect. We were to meet in a resort town on Lake Michigan.

We got there and settled down at the bar. This couple came toward us, but my back was toward them. Lew's mouth fell open and he said, "Jesus Christ." When I turned to see them, the first thing I saw was this guy with a Goldwater button the size of a small saucer on his lapel. His wife had on a hat with plastic flowers on it and she was obviously girdled. They went to the bar to order a drink and I said, "Lew, let's get the hell out of here." He said, "No, we've come this far, we might as well let them talk and we'll find out what this is all about."

This couple finally sat down, and after the preliminaries asked what we were into. We said we were interested in group sex. They looked very shocked and said, "We're not into that, we're just into swapping." Their thing was to get two motel rooms and Sally goes off with him and she goes off with Lew and we get together a few hours later and have a cup of coffee. Lou and I said that we had this fantasy about group sex and that swapping was not a novelty to either of us. So they talked about it a while and decided to try it. We got into this sleazy motel and this woman got undressed and began pulling off her girdle. Then she laid down on the bed and started thrashing around and groaning — nobody'd even touched her.

Lew just couldn't get it up. The whole thing was a very funny experience, and in about half an hour we decided to shake hands and part. Lew and I made jokes for about six months about the wonderful orgy we had gone to with these people.

Later when we came out to California, in L.A., both of us were teaching at UCLA at the time, and we decided to try to actualize our fantasies again. We answered an ad in the paper and partied with some swingers in L.A. for a long time... almost a year. But it was fairly dreadful. I mean there were some hot group sex — the zipless fuck is a wonderful fantasy and most of the men were way above average as sex partners. It's just that it was always anonymous, there were never any friendships, everybody used phony names — it was always white, middle class and after the first rush of novelty, we both burned out on it.

We kept on having fantasies — there's got to be a place somewhere where there's real friendship and attractive physical surroundings and so forth and so on. We had a fantasy of what a group sex place would look like. Oh, one interesting sidelight — Lew and I were in Europe in 1969 and returned driving from the east coast out to New Mexico. I had heard Masters & Johnson talk in 1960... when they were really avant garde. We decided as long as we were going through St. Louis we'd stop off at their place and talk with them. I chatted with Johnson and really found her to be an attractive woman. We told them about our group sex experiences and we laughed like hell. Ginny Johnson said, "You guys should really meet Ed Brecher." She gave us Ed Brecher's address and phone number. We wrote him that when he was out west he should come and see us. Just before Lew and I split up, Ed came to town and stayed with us and we had a three-way one evening. He was just a delightful playmate from day one.

**Susie:** Tell me about what Sandstone was.

**Sally:** In early 1970, Ed Brecher, who'd gotten to be a good friend by that time, called me and said he heard there was a place in L.A. that might interest me. I called them — they had an office in Westwood at that time — and asked them to send me a brochure. The brochure said it was for people aged 18-45. I had just turned 46. I called up and said "I'm just furious about this — I just missed it." The guy I talked to said, "Oh, come and have a talk with me anyhow." So I went in. The brochure was very attractive and described this sort of laid back place up in the Santa Monica mountains. I went down to the office and talked with two of the people there, who really looked like neat people. They spoke of going up and looking at the place, to see what I thought. So I drove up there and walked into a room full of five naked people and they were all extremely pleasant and attractive. They were nice, bright, and very informed. The place was started by a group of people who were super-achievers, who had dropped out... who'd done a little acid, done Fritz Perles and Esalen. They'd all sunk their money into buying this place. It was hip. They had sort of a seven person group marriage going on and they wanted to have members who came up any day except Monday — Monday was their closed day — and parties on weekends People would come up and hang out and swim...beautiful, beautiful property... and lie in the sun and read and talk and fuck if they wanted to, be naked if they wanted to. It was in many ways the finest flowering of the 1960s and it couldn't last very long. The first year there was just a real high because the age range was actually about 18-65, and it was inter- racial, cross-cultural and everybody from steel construction workers to movie producers to academics to dopers to god-knows-what. The only ground rules were no dope allowed on the premises; although often acid was dropped or we did something to alter our state before we got there. Two, you must take no for an answer, which was a very educational thing for a lot of guys there. In a little over a year, I'd say I spent three days a week at Sandstone and never saw a fight, never heard a raised voice, never any violence. There were some people who had a problem with jealousy, but there was always a big spontaneous support group around to take that person who was feeling jealous anxiety and lay him or her down and give them a ten-person massage. It's amazing what that did to eliminate jealousy. A lot of people who never went to Sandstone were so hung up on the sex that went on they couldn't think of it as a place where anything else happened. And certainly Gay Talese never understood what Sandstone was about — all he saw was the sex and could never get

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You have to trust your clit, and the hardest part is not giving in to the puritanism that's always lurking around the corner from desire. What frightens me is how well I know how to censor.

As Barbra LaRue wrote in our second issue, "The truly queer thing about porn is its ability to arouse in spite of itself." Most pornography today gets its impact from the simple fact that it's taboo — porn publishers have never put much effort into creativity or content because they've never *had* to. While "men's magazines" have been putting out the same mediocre stuff year after year, lesbians have yet to be programmed into accepting a sexual formula.

The bottom line is, "explicit" does not have to mean "exploited." You *can* put "hot sex" on your New Year's resolution list, and not feel guilty! Since we're talking censorship in the feminist community right now it doesn't hurt to recall that cunnilingus is still against the law in many places (we're perverts — remember?) so why *not* talk about leather fetishes and your lover's taste for small, unripe bananas? If we can write endless poems about the smell of the sea (hint, hint), why can't someone describe in lusting detail the way cunt really tastes... and feels?

Didn't your mother ever tell you honesty is the best policy?

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Continued from page 7

Start" method. Begin using your vibrator as usual, and when you feel close to your brink, turn it off and continue with your hand or your partner. Keep going back and forth between the different methods, letting your arousal play from one stimulation to another. By this time you will have found that it can be extremely pleasurable (and maddening, all at the same time) to delay your orgasm through the Stop/Start exercise.

Another suggestion when you want to set aside your vibrator is to pick out something sexy to read or look at while you play with yourself. I just brought home an album called "Talk Dirty To Me" by porn star Sharon Mitchell, which seems perfect for experimenting with aural sex.

Listen, there are vibrator lovers out there who never came at all before they bought their toy, and I think you'd have to have a lot of nerve to condemn their satisfaction as being unnatural or addictive. Sexual repression and lack of sensual feeling are what's epidemic and sick in our little world. It is both a Susie Sexpert and scientific fact that More Orgasms lead to More Orgasms, and here lies the greatest virtue of Buzzing Off.


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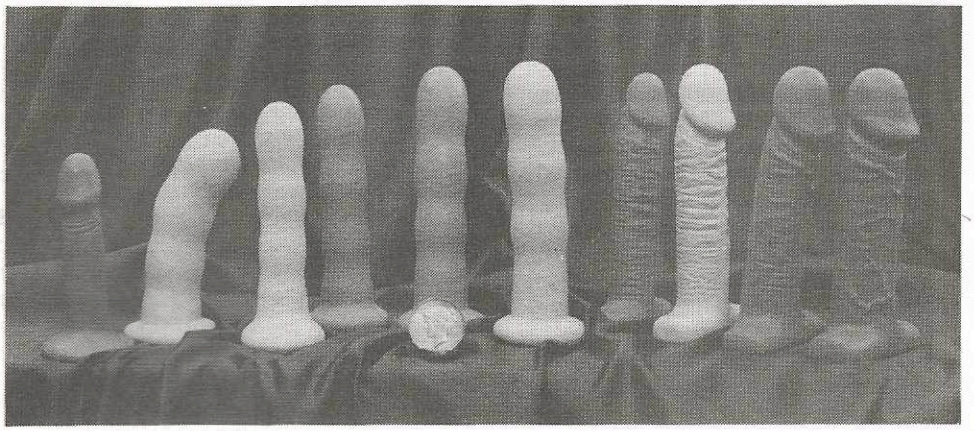

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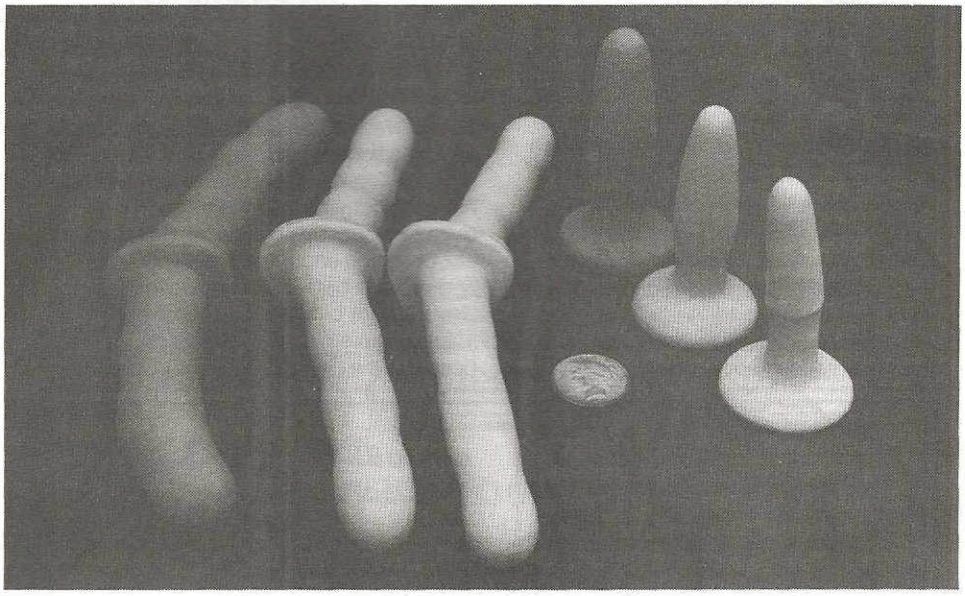

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beyond it. (Gay Talese included Sandstone and Sally in his bestseller *Thy Neighbor's Wife*.)

But actually when you walked in the living room, you would see chess games, hear chamber music, political discussions. All kinds of things happening and maybe over in the corner would be a couple getting it on. But it was more than a fuck club — certainly very strong friendships formed there and some of the strongest friendships I have even now are Sandstone friendships. I can pick up with them on a level of intimacy even now that I can't obtain with people I've known longer.

**Susie:** Did you start to think of yourself as bisexual through your Sandstone experience?

**Sally:** Yes, definitely. There's where it happened. That was the first supporting, easy place where I could touch women, be touched by women, and get it on without it being threatening or a sour experience.

**Susie:** Did women go all the way when they had sex at Sandstone or was it the sort of bisexual experience that is centered around the man?

**Sally:** There was a lot of female coupling that went on for hours. Sometimes ir twos, and threes, and four women. It was a place where somebody could walk in and say, "Look, you know, this is my fantasy tonight, who wants to play?" You could almost always scare up four or five people who were willing to play and help you act out your fantasy. It was totally safe and it was very supportive for that kind of thing.

**Susie:** Do you think after having made love with a number of men, that you finc any generic differences between lovemaking with women and lovemaking with men?

**Sally:** Definitely.

**Susie:** Please... please tell us.

**Sally:** Well, with women its slower and gentler... mostly slower. And that slow tempo is great. Most men, just like the books say, do tend to be genitally oriented and head for the cunt too fast. Once men come, most men are finished. Women go on forever.

**Susie:** You said you had your first solo experience with women in your mid-40s. Tell me what that was like. Did you feel at all shy, or did it just seem like an extension of your Sandstone experience?

**Sally:** Well, at Sandstone it seemed like an extension of group sex. Once I left Sandstone and moved up here, I started hanging out with lots of lesbians. I felt quite shy because I knew all the rules about sexual encounters between men and women but I didn't know what the signals were between women. I had to learn a whole new way of coping because the ground rules with women were different. Once again I decided the safe way to explore women was group sex and so I started going to women's parties. Also, at the same time I was very curious about S/M. I went to those first S/M women's parties at the time... and discovered S/M *fantasies* got me off a lot more than S/M reality. I really am not turned on by a lover in Crisco and chains. I wish I could be but I'm not.

**Susie:** When you were talking about being introduced to lesbians and learning new ground rules, I'm sure you got introduced all over again from your summer camp years to the idea of butch and femme, which are sexually powerful for a lot of lesbians. Does butch/femme have anything to do with you sexuality?

**Sally:** I would say that I am on the scale of one to ten I am an eight in terms of being femme as opposed to butch.

**Susie:** Yeah!

**Sally:** I'm occasionally a switch-hitter but I really am drawn to butch lesbians.

**Susie:** What is a sexual definition of being femme to you? When you say a woman is butch what does that mean to you? Especially when you're talking about her in a sexual way and not because she has a tie on at that particular moment?

**Sally:** A butch to me is a woman who gets off giving it, getting women off. And who takes pride in her skills pleasing women. I'm so tired of trite talk about it being male and female. Butch/femme is not male/female at all — it's female/female but its the particular ways you act it out sexually and socially.

**Susie:** What is it to be a femme? Is it to be laid back and take it all very well?

**Sally:** That's part of it. Part of it is... (struggle with words) butch/femme relationships I know, my own included, the femme is the one who is more skilled at coping with the world. (lots of laughs) But I think there's some real reasons for this — the butches are the ones who historically "look like dykes" and who've had a hard time getting jobs and getting hired, keeping jobs, coping with the work-a-day world. I think it's much much easier for femmes to pass than butches.

**Susie:** A lot of these questions I realize may have changed along the years... How would you characterize your sexuality as a teenager, as being in your 20s, 30s, 40s...

**Sally:** Well, when I was a teenager through my twenties I was much more interested in my social persona. I was exploring more, I was interested in "could I attract partners, would I know

what to do, was I a good lay, what was a good lay, what did I really like from a partner". I don't think it was because I was shy, because I was never shy, but I didn't know how to ask for what I wanted, because I didn't know what I wanted. I slept with a lot of people, a lot of guys who were very poor lovers — this was to me a way of cutting through a lot of social nonsense and getting to know a person very directly. Going to bed with them would be a gamble. Either I want to know this person better or I don't. This was a very active period for me. Like a lot of women I found out when I hit my early 30s there was a tremendous upsurge in my sexual feeling.

**Susie:** You believe that's really true.

**Sally:** Oh yes, I do believe that was true. It's happened to me, it's happened to a lot of women. Somewhere between 31 and 35 — the 2nd wave hits and it's fantastic.

**Susie:** What did you discover were your erogenous zones?

**Sally:** For me? Breasts, cunt, umm, my whole skin is very sensitive if it's properly touched or improperly touched. I love oral sex, I like being penetrated; but I like being penetrated after a lot of oral sex. I was very, very slow in getting into my ass — extremely slow. Very retarded in that area. I still don't like being fucked in the ass.

**Susie:** Moving on to your 30s...

**Sally:** Then I had sex with a lot of people. And I most often got off. When I didn't get off I would often fake it. "Damn, I came, get off me!" They didn't know the difference. I would say that during my middle to late 30s was when I decided okay, I'd gone to graduate school, I'd gotten my Ph.D., done all this, now I'm going to get into heavy serious exploring of sex. Before that sex was always there but it was something I did furtively, and if I had more than one lover I lied like a trooper and was very good at juggling multiple relationships and keeping everybody in the dark. But I guess after my first round of group sex with my last husband — my early 40s — that I didn't want to do that anymore. I was tired of laying and playing games. When I went to Sandstone it was an opportunity to be very open about what I was doing and to find out who I was sexually. Then I was with Jason for eight years and he was great fun. We enjoyed group sex together, we enjoyed solo adventures apart from each other, and we also had a great time together in bed.

**Susie:** Did having kids do anything as far as your sexuality went? Did your body feel different, did sex feel different?

**Sally:** Yeah. I have one daughter and I had two aborted pregnancies. I was 24 when I became pregnant. It was a wonderful, incredible experience. To sit back and watch all these changes happening to my body — wow, that's my bellybutton turned inside out! My tits got big, and I felt very sexual. My then husband was terrified. He wouldn't touch me, so I spent a great deal of my pregnancy masturbating. One of the funny things that happened was when I started to nurse my daughter, I discovered it was a very erotic experience. When I was around several of my other friends with small kids, I said, "When you're nursing do you get turned on?" "Oh my god, no. What a disgusting idea." Well, nursing *is* very erotic experience because your breasts are so full and so achey and that sucking little mouth feels incredible.

**Susie:** Nowadays, do you feel that there is a part of your sexual character that people are least likely to understand?

**Sally:** Well, in the first place people don't expect a woman of 60 to be very


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sexual. Feeling the pressure of age is incredible — that's number 1. Number 2 — since I hang out mostly with lesbians now I find a great deal of intolerance toward bisexuals. I'm still attracted to some men and somehow this is politically incorrect.

**Susie:** How has sex changed with time in your relationship?

**Sally:** It's gotten better. My lover gets me off like nobody else ever has. That's one of the things I deeply love her for (not the only...). We have sex less often than I used to, but I'd say we have sex about twice a week and it's really good.

**Susie:** I asked you before about what kind of sexual activity turns you on and what turns you on about your body. I know that you're a pornography aficionado, so I want you to tell me about what turns you on in terms of visuals and written stuff. What kind of...

**Sally:** Well, let me say *I was* a big consumer of porn. A lot of porn now — you read so much of it and it just gets to be the same thing over and over again. I would love to see somebody write good porn. *The Story of O* came out in the early 1960s. I remember the first time I read that book I must have had six orgasms in the first three chapters. (**Susie:** REALLY?) I think it was because it was sensitively written and well written porn from a woman's point of view, and that was totally novel. Good porn is really hard to find — that's one reason I'm glad that *On Our Backs* is out. Porn movies have improved incredibly. I saw my first porn movie during the early 50s and it was this screaming black and white thing of men with black socks on and women in housedresses.

**Susie:** Have you read any good sexy books recently? Has anything captured the power of *The Story of O* or is that in a class by itself?

**Sally:** I haven't found any good porn recently. Now and then I go into the back of Jack's on Chestnut Street and look through the big rack of stuff that they have. But they're all about spanking of doing it with dogs or slave/bondage but they're all the same and not well written. My main argument with WAVPM (Women Against Violence and Pornography in Media) people is not that porn will lead to rape but that most porn leads to boredom.

**Susie:** Speaking of sexually explicit media, I wanted you to talk about making your sex film... have you made more than one? Tell us about your super stardom in the sex film industry. Was it fun? Did you just do it for the betterment of society?

**Sally:** I was living with Jason, we were living at Sandstone, it was 1974, and Ed Brecher called me from the East Coast to say that he had been in contact with the National Sex Forum. He said they were doing a series of films to show the range of human sexual behavior. One of the complaints they'd received was that all the films were of young people, and they wanted some older people to make a fuck film. Ed said he'd volunteered to be the male in this film and they'd chosen this woman to be his partner. But he had a feeling after talking to her on the phone that it might not work out. If it didn't work out, would I make a fuck film with him? I said, "Well, tell me something about the National Sex Forum." He mentioned it was two Methodist ministers, which turned me off immediately. But he assured me that it was a bona-fide sex research outfit, that the film couldn't be shown in porn theaters; it was for sex therapy. I said I'd have to think about it. I went and talked to Jason who said, "God, it sounds great." Since we were both talking about sexual discrimination against older people, he said to put my ass where my mouth was. Sure enough, a phone call came from Ed a week later saying this woman chickened out and would I fly to San Francisco to be his partner in this film. I said what the hell — why not? I'll try this. I cam up and met the people at the Sex Forum. The next day three people — Laird, Sally and Bob Durham — took Ed and me to a house boat in Sausalito. They said, "Okay, pretend we aren't here. Just do what you would do anyhow."

We smoked a little and rank a little and got it on for a few hours. There were moments in which I was totally panicky and almost couldn't continue. But I told myself, "This is your big exhibitionist fantasy!" Then I would immediately get turned on again. There were also the intense moments where I would be oblivious that the crew was present. They were very quiet, they were very good people to do the film for in that sense. It was a good experience.

**Susie:** What other films have you made since then?

**Sally:** They wanted a two male, one female, three-way film. Jason and I had our friend Peter, whom we got it on with often, so we called him and said, "Come on and make a movie with us for science." Peter agreed and we did a film which was edited very strangely because the editor had some problem with male homosexuality. The film looked more like a gang bang by two guys rather than the actual three-way which it was.

**Susie:** Do you get turned on by two men making love?

**Sally:** Yes. In the first place it's sex. And, there's something — the first time I saw two guys fucking, I was reminded of the first time I saw two horses fucking. I mean, there is a kind of power there; the sheer muscular power of it that is a real rush. When I watched Jason get fucked by a guy, I would see Jason sort of transformed into this female, you know, lying back with his legs out. He's a guy, transformed into this very passive, receptive person. It was really exciting.

**Susie:** What kind of sexual adventures would you still like to have? New frontiers? Or are you happy with the frontiers you're on right now?

**Sally:** My fantasy, although I know it's my fantasy and I'm not going to try and force it on my lover, is that she would suddenly become interested in group sex and we could play together with other people. But that is purely a personal fantasy that I masturbate behind because I know that it's not gonna happen, it's not her trip.

**Susie:** You were saying earlier that you wished leather and chains did something for you but they don't. Do you have any fetishes at all? Do any objects or materials do something to you sexually? Or is it nothing in comparison to the human body?

**Sally:** I guess I don't — so ashamed — I feel inadequate. (laughter) No fetishes — how boring.

**Susie:** Well, you still have your vibrator so that can count as a fetish. Do you find any kind of costuming or sexual theatre appealing to you?

**Sally:** In my fantasies — yes.

**Susie:** So what are the people wearing?

**Sally:** I'm trying to remember if I've had any specific fantasies. Just soft fabrics — velvets, silks. I'm into soft.

**Susie:** Do you like lingerie? Does that do anything for you?

**Sally:** Not particularly. I think probably as part of the rebellion against my 1930s adolescence, when Jean Harlow was the sex object. I'm really into nude bodies.

**Susie:** Is there anybody famous you consider an appropriate sex object for our time?

**Sally:** Somebody once asked me is there anybody you ever really wanted to fuck but didn't. And as kinky as it sounds, I always wanted to get it on with Count Basie. There was something about the way he'd do those piano keys

and his humor that made me feel he would be great fun in bed.

**Susie:** Is there anything that you find sexy in terms of gay life, gay community, or gay bar life? You know, some people have their homosexual relationship and it's in their bedroom or in their home — there's nothing out there that appeals to them. Sandstone was a mixed sexual community that really did something for you. Do you find anything sexually attractive in the gay community?

**Sally:** Yeah. The dance last week — the BACW (Bay Area Career Women) dance — there were 2,000 women and the most incredible variety of age, color, dress, getup and presentation of self. To me that was a real rush, a turn on to see that and to be part of it. A lot about the "lesbian community" — actually it's not A community but many communities — turns me off. There's a strong streak of anti-sexual puritanism and it should be stamped out... stomped on, expunged. I think there's a lot of detrimental shit that comes down about what is politically correct lesbian sex and what isn't. I know some women who really believe penetration is an enactment of our patriarchal culture and I am distressed by this level of stupidity. Bar life in general doesn't turn me on and gay bars don't turn me on more than do straight bars. Poker parties and orgies is where it's at. Quote me on that would you please! I loved going to those S/M parties because it was a chance to satisfy my curiosity about S/M. To be a voyeur, to see what was happening, to play if I wanted to. I don't think I would ever have gone to a heterosexual S/M party. But an all women's S/M party I felt was safe.

**Susie:** What is it in an S/M fantasy that appeals to you? Where do you see yourself in them?

**Sally:** The thing about S/M fantasy that gets me off is my being so turned on that I can be totally — you know — I'm not responsible for what happens. In terms of S&M, B&D, whatever — my fantasy is not to be topped by pain. My fantasy is to be topped by pleasure — to have a partner who is so skillful and so gentle that I want *anything*. But no rough handling, no leather and no bondage. Just put your hands here and because I'm so turned on I will do exactly as I'm told.

**Susie:** Sounds like a lovely obedience school.

**Sally:** But one other thing I discovered during my explorations of SM is that nothing turns me off faster than verbal abuse. Nothing. I think I could take whipping easier than I could verbal abuse, and maybe a part of it has to do with being raised in a middle class Jewish family where I wasn't spanked but you were verbally assaulted. After all, it was the Jews who wrote "in the beginning was the word," and we're such a verbal culture anyhow. To me verbal abuse is the worst turn-off there is. I know a lot of people get turned on by — "you're a slut." Nothing turns me off faster. Absolutely nothing.

**Susie:** Not only getting it, but delivering it too?

**Sally:** Yes.

## MY LOVER'S CUNT

My lover's cunt
Is 'bout four miles deep!
I can reach in there
With my whole hand
I can play in there
For half-an-hour
At least!
And she
Comes
and she Comes
And she Comes some more!
She floods my hand, my arm
My bed
With her come —
And then —
She comes again!

Then she pushes up
From four miles down —
She almost shoves my hand
Right out —
With just her cunt,
Yeah, just her Cunt!

But I hang on,
I play some more —
And then —
She comes Again!

**LYNN DREAMINHAWK**

**Susie:** It's interesting to see how much the current S/M community has been like a diving board for people to get into whole sexual identities that really don't have anything to do with S/M. It was your entry into a much more closer relationship to women and to lesbian life. For me it was my entry into butch/femme stuff. A sort of unexpected pay-off.

**Sally:** We all need outside forces to give us permission to do what we want.

**Susie:** Do you feel that sexual violence that's happened towards you or other women has given you sexual caution and fear? Have you ever held back because of it?

**Sally:** Now that you mention it, this is fascinating. One of the ways in which I got over that fear about men being violent or hurtful was that when I was with a man, I always ran the fuck. I took charge. I think because I've been with so many bumbling men who were ignorant, not deliberately hurtful. I would say most men love it when a woman takes charge because they very seldom get a chance to lie back and be "done to." If you tell a guy, lie down, I'm gonna do you, you know, — "you are?" How great, you know. That was a turn-on and a change for them and it also gave me control of what was happening. One of my attractions about being with women is I feel I can lie back, open up, and receive... safely.

**Susie:** What does it mean to you when somebody runs the fuck?

**Sally:** The easy answer is power but I don't know that that's what I was concerned about. When I ran the fuck with a man I was making sure: a) I got what I wanted, b) it wouldn't be a hippity- hop-wham-bam job. It was a way of making a potentially hurtful experience safe and fun. But with women I don't have to be in charge and that to me is a big, big turn-on. Most of the women that I've had experiences with have been skillful enough, and knowledgeable enough, that I don't feel I have to guard my body. I'm sure I've had an unrepresentative sample of women partners — they've almost all been workers in the sex field.

**Susie:** Well, Sally, it's just not fair that you didn't have to go through any bumbling, clumsy, early lesbian sex days!

One other thing that occured to me while you were talking about your peak sexual experiences: your introduction to Sandstone, your introduction to these lesbian S/M parties, the BACW dance — you said the excitement was in having all kinds of people together in one place. While some may think that's the socially polite thing to say, it really seems to be a turn-on for you. Other people are much more turned on being with people exactly like themselves. They want the sameness rather than the differences. Have you always felt like this? What about it is exciting to you?

**Sally:** I guess it's exciting partly because I was raised in a very homogenous community and wanted to bust out of it as soon as possible. That's one reason I'm an anthropologist — human variability, you know, in physical type, and behavior, and sexual activity. It is a constant source of wonder and amazement to me.

Continued from page **30**

be like Jacqui and her friends. I let the nightgown fall to the floor and slowly began to undress, terribly aware of Jacqui's naked body standing so close to me.

My movements were much more awkward than hers had been. I fumbled with the zipper on my skirt, and nearly tripped as I stepped out of my panties and slip. I felt myself blush as I removed my blouse and bra, exposing my tiny plump breasts to Jacqui's appraising eyes. There was no indication of what Jacqui thought of me, though, as she turned away and walked quickly back to her bed, flipping off the overhead light on her way.

"Well, goodnight Ellen," she said, her voice light and casual.

I was left standing in the semi-darkness, uncertain of what my next move should be. There didn't seem to be anything to do except crawl under the covers and try to sleep, so I retreated to my bed, whispering a shy goodnight to Jacqui.

It seemed that I lay in bed for hours, unable to sleep, reviewing the events of my first day at Redfern. I'd been introduced to many girls, and their faces swam before me, disconnected from any names or personal details I might have been told. I thought of Jacqui's swift, sure stride as we'd walked along the campus; the way she seemed to know everything and everyone. I was flattered that she'd shown me such kindness and paid such attention to me. I didn't want to anger her or spoil anything, but before long I knew that I had to wake her.

"Jacqui," I whispered, "Are you up?"

I was surprised at how quickly she turned around, her face visibly alert, lighted by the streetlamp that stood beneath our window.

"Jacqui," I continued, "Are there no exceptions to the rule about using the bathroom after eight o'clock? I really have to go."

My voice sounded pitifully close to tears and I was afraid Jacqui would despise my lack of control. But when she sat up, tossing the sheet and blanket aside, her voice was filled with concern and comfort.

"I'm really sorry, Ellen, but there's no way we can break the rules. I know how awful you must feel. Let me show you what *we* always do."

In a second Jacqui was out of bed and walking towards her dresser. She returned with a small juice glass that she said was stolen from the cafeteria.

"You can use this," she encouraged. I felt doubtful as I got out of bed and stood before her.

"How?" I asked, my voice and body both trembling now, with the fear that I'd shame myself forever by peeing on the floor.

"It's really very easy," Jacqui assured me. "All you have to do is kneel down on the floor. Come on, I'll show you."

As she lowered herself to her knees, her legs spread apart on the hard wooden floor, Jacqui pulled me down beside her. I allowed Jacqui to urge my knees farther apart with her hands.

"Just hold the glass under you and pee," she instructed.

I felt frozen, immobile. What if I missed? What if I wet the floor?

Jacqui seemed to read my thought and asked if I'd prefer to have her hold the glass in place.

"Yes," I whispered, gratefully.

"Just hold onto my shoulders for balance," she offered. As I placed my shaking hands on her cool, smooth skin, she nodded that it was safe to begin.

I felt unimaginable relief as I relaxed my muscles and heard my pee trickle into the glass. It seemed that only seconds passed, though, before Jacqui was ordering me to stop, saying the glass was nearly full. The commanding tone in her voice caused me to tighten my muscles instantly. All the relief I'd felt a moment earlier was gone, and my body tensed as I watched Jacqui stand up, balancing the glass before her, and walk away.

She returned almost immediately, this time carrying a large, rectangular plastic container. I wondered, fleetingly, where it had come from. Wondered, also, why Jacqui hadn't provided it originally, instead of the inadequate juice glass. But all thoughts vanished quickly as Jacqui knelt before me again and placed the large container on the floor beneath my out-stretched legs.

I didn't need any encouragement to continue. I felt as though my bladder were about to burst inside me and I gratefully relaxed my muscles once again, producing a quick, hot stream of pee. There was no longer a need to hold onto Jacqui for balance, since I was perched over a less precarious object, but I found myself grasping her shoulders for support anyway. Her hands were upon me, as well, stroking my upper arms and then my breasts.

I felt her fingers tugging on my nipples, twisting them with short, hard turns. I began to cry out in protest, but Jacqui's eyes were staring into mine, daring me to accept her actions.

Finally, as the last trace of pee trickled into the container, I accepted her fully, tilting my head back, and releasing myself to an abandonment I'd never before imagined. This time I couldn't control the cry that escaped from me. But it was clearly not a sound of protest.


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you may lose your hand
reaching.

**K.M.C. MINNS**

# CONTRIBUTORS

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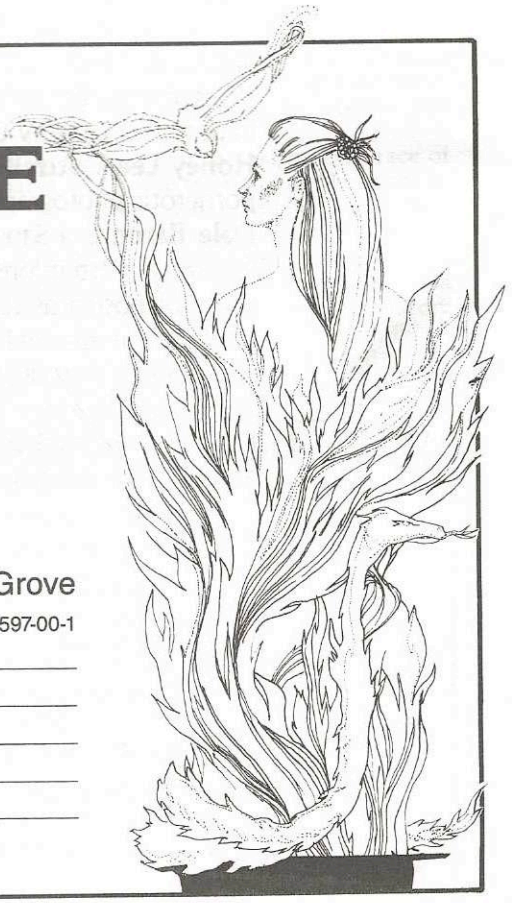

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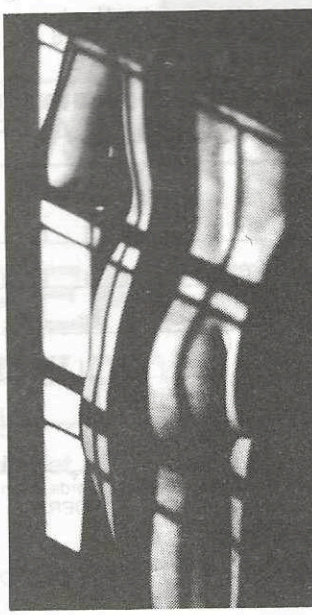

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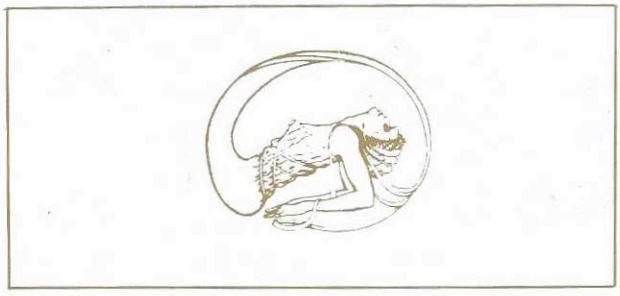

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PO Box 18714

## OREGON
**Portland**
Woman's Place
2349 S.E. Ankeny

**Eugene**
Mother Kali
541 Blair

## PENNSYLVANIA
**Philadelphia**
Giovanni's
345 S. 12th N.E.

## TEXAS
**Houston**
Wilde & Stein
PO Box 66282

**Austin**
Bookwoman
324 Sixth Street E.

## WASHINGTON
**Seattle**
Different Drummer
420 Broadway E.

Crypt # 20
1310 E. Union

Bailey-Coy
408 Broadway E.

## WASHINGTON, DC
Lamma's
321 Seventh Street S.E.

Lambda Rising
1625 Connecticut N.W.

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## CANADA
**Montreal**
Librarie L'Androgyne
3642 Boul St. Laurent

**Toronto**
Glad Day
598 A Yonge

**Vancouver**
Ariel
2766 W. Fourth Avenue

Little Sisters
1221 Thurlow

## AUSTRALIA
**New South Wales**
Women's Health Center
Liverpool 2170